

# Marx Engels

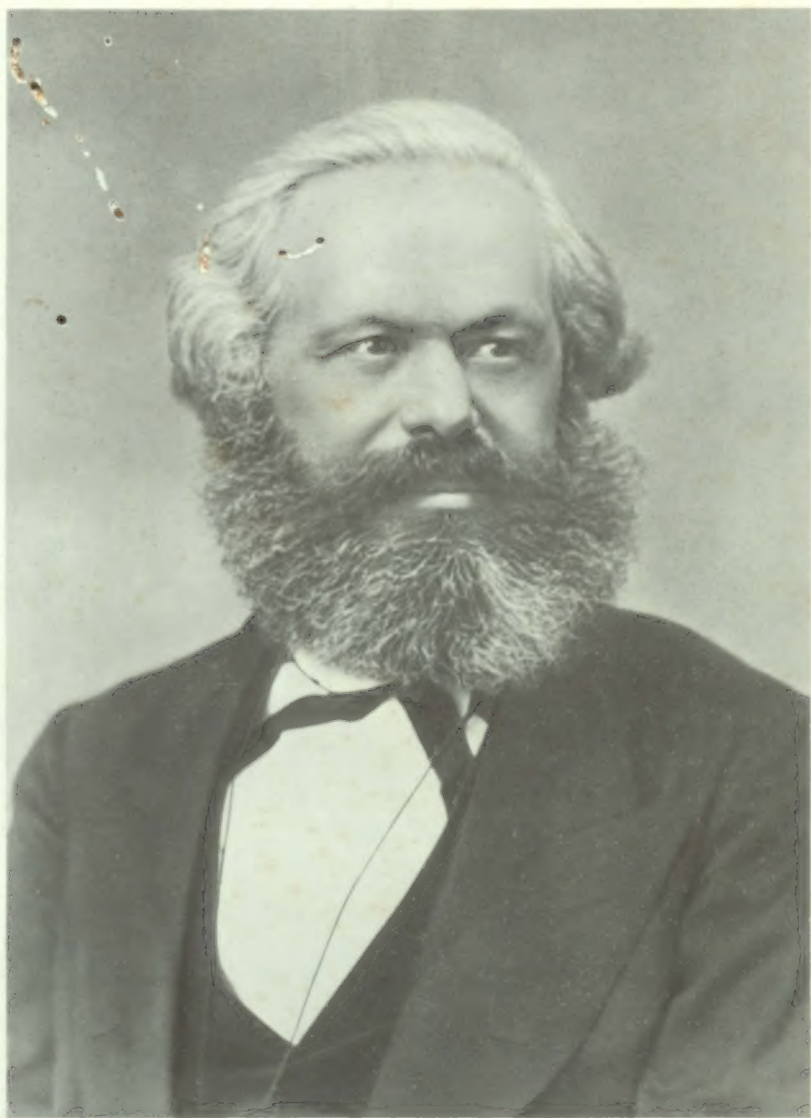
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## *On Reformism*



PROGRESS Publishers

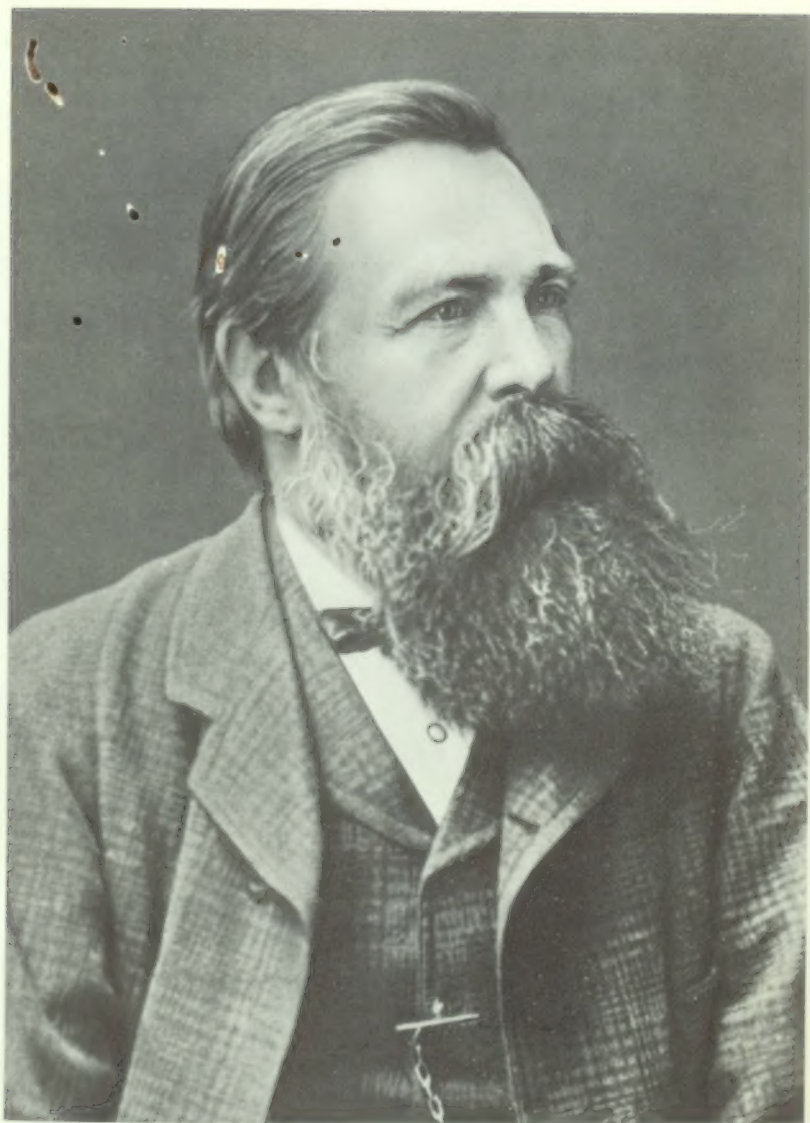




Karl Marx







*F. Engels*



# Marx Engels

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## *On Reformism*

*A Collection*



PROGRESS Publishers • Moscow

**Маркс  
Энгельс**

**О РЕФОРМИЗМЕ**

*На английском языке*

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## Preface •

An important place in the literary works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels is held by their critique of the various trends of reformist ideology. This is perfectly natural. One of the greatest accomplishments of human thought was the elaboration by Marx and Engels of the materialist interpretation of history. It was they who for the first time showed the inevitability of and need for social revolutions, revealed the objective laws that give rise to them, and scientifically substantiated the historical role of the working class in the age of capitalism, as a force which must bring about the further progressive development of society. Marx and Engels proved scientifically that the path of this development lies through the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, through socialist, proletarian revolution.

This certainly did not mean denying the importance of reforms. Marx and Engels stressed the significance of reform as an essential element of social development, the need for the struggle of the working class for the legislative restriction of the working day and of female and child labour and for general democratic transformations, etc. But the founders of Marxism note that reforms can neither prevent nor take the place of radical revolutionary transformations of the mode of production. Whereas reforms ensure progressive development within the framework of a given formation, the transition from one formation to another is possible only by means of revolution.

Marx and Engels encountered various forms of reformist ideology and various manifestations of its influence on the working-class movement. These were bourgeois reformism and the closely related bourgeois socialism, petty-bourgeois reformist socialism, which had a certain influence on the working-class movement in the early period of its develop-

ment, reformist trends within the working-class movement itself (trade unionism, Lassalleanism), and the reformist trend that arose within the Social-Democratic parties. In combating all these trends, Marx and Engels revealed their true class roots and criticised their basic dogmas, showing the utopianism and bankruptcy of reformist aspirations. It was they too who showed the connection of transformed reformist trends with the development of the working-class movement.

The first stage in the establishment of the revolutionary world outlook was connected with the struggle by Marx and Engels against various bourgeois and petty-bourgeois reformist conceptions of socialism. Already in *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels wrote that it was essential to drop "all phrases ... which tend to dim the realisation of the sharpness of this opposition" between the bourgeois and the proletarians, phrases which "may give the bourgeois a chance to approach the communists for safety's sake on the strength of their philanthropic enthusiasm" (Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, Moscow, 1976, p. 469). Philanthropic enthusiasm is, in fact, the essence of bourgeois reformist socialism: to retain capitalism and to destroy the elements that revolutionise and break down this society, and together with the bourgeoisified nobility to create bourgeoisified proletariat. Behind all the different bourgeois reformist conceptions Marx and Engels detected their common, basic features, their conservative essence. The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* and later the *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* define the historical conditions that give rise to this phenomenon of social life. Bourgeois reformist socialism arises in the course of the industrial revolution, after the political victory of the bourgeoisie, when the slogan "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité" loses its appeal. The poverty and wretchedness of the toiling masses engender in a section of the bourgeoisie the desire to cure social ills in order to strengthen the existing order. For all the sincerity of bourgeois socialists they go no further than "administrative reforms" (present edition, p. 31). As Marx and Engels showed, their efforts to achieve a class peace and universal prosperity are utopian, because they change nothing

in "the relations between capital and wage labour".

Marx and Engels frequently stressed the inner kinship of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois reformist socialism and showed that neither is capable of advancing beyond the framework of capitalist relations, that they regard capitalist social relations as eternal, and that the proletariat is lost in the general concept of the toiling masses. This is why in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* Proudhon (whose name is connected with one of the most widespread trends of reformist thought) is assessed as a representative of bourgeois socialism.

As we know, in other works the founders of scientific communism regarded Proudhon as a typical representative of petty-bourgeois reformist socialism. This is explained by the contradictory nature of petty-bourgeois socialism itself. In this particular case, however, the objective closeness of the two reformist trends is emphasised.

In his books Pierre-Joseph Proudhon expressed the hopes and illusions of the broad masses of small property-owners, first and foremost, the ruined and debt-ridden peasants and the urban hard-working semi-artisans. This is why Proudhon's views became fairly widespread. His first book *Qu'est-ce que la propriété?* (What is Property?), which contains a critique of capitalism (particularly finance capital), and a criticism of the existing order as a whole (its law, state, and morals), was positively assessed by Marx and Engels. Proudhon was not an apologist for capitalism, he always had "a deep and genuine feeling of indignation at the infamy of what exists" (p. 40), and was opposed to the prevailing order. However, for all this Proudhon's views, like petty-bourgeois socialism as a whole, were a serious obstacle to the development of the working-class movement.

Proudhon regarded as the main evil not private ownership of the means of production, but the "unequivalent" and "unjust" exchange of products of labour, commercial profit and loan interest. He considered it essential to work out measures aimed at preserving petty economy and small property, to, as it were, dissolve in the latter the already developed capitalist relations and large property, and to create a society of

“equal” private producers, uniting workers and capitalists.

Already in the 1840s, when the first international workers’ organisation was created, the Communist League, and it was essential to draw up a precise class programme, Marx and Engels found themselves obliged to attack the views developed by Proudhon in his *Philosophie de la misère* (The Philosophy of Poverty) and other works.

Marx and Engels showed the reactionary nature of Proudhon’s ideas, his desire to turn back the wheel of history, to create artificially a society of small producers free from both feudal fetters and the capitalist vices. Proudhon was unable to advance beyond the framework of bourgeois economic science – he operates its categories as eternal ones, not realising that behind them lie definite social relations, namely, capitalist relations.

It was not merely a question of criticising Proudhon’s theory, however. The preaching of class peace, denial of the need for political struggle, a nihilistic attitude to national liberation movements, and rejection of the strike struggle – all this was not merely an obstacle to ideological development, but also prevented the organisational cohesion of the workers, the creation of independent class organisations. The struggle against Proudhonist reformism became one of the main aspects of Marx’s activity in the First International. Already in the Inaugural Address of the Working Men’s International Association (pp. 34-38), basing himself on concrete material, he explains to workers that cooperation by itself and other forms of workers’ self-organisation cannot lead to radical changes in social reality and substantiates the need for the workers to gain state power and organise production on a national scale. In the course of discussions on the use of machines and on female and child labour Marx proves the advantage of large-scale industry, showing that the task is not to abolish it, but to abolish the social relations that make possible the use of industrial progress to exploit the proletariat.

The activity of Marx and Engels in the International helped progressive workers to overcome Proudhonist views. This was seen most clearly in the Paris Commune, which became the grave of old Proudhonism. It is significant that



the representatives of orthodox Proudhonism were to be found on the other side of the barricades (see Resolution on the expulsion of Tolain, p. 58.).

During the same period Marx and Engels were fighting reformism of a different type. Its bearers were the leaders of the British trade unions. The trade union movement embodied a certain, although very limited, experience of the class struggle. This explains why Marx and Engels sought to establish contacts with trade unions and to draw them into the international proletarian movement, the First International. In so doing they were counting on the possibility of the British trade unions evolving into truly militant organisations of the workers. However, it proved impossible to prevent them from becoming reformist organisations. The development of trade-unionist ideology and practice was decisively influenced by bourgeois ideology. Trade-unionism proceeded from the permanent nature of capitalist relations and sought by means of partial reforms to improve radically the position of organised workers within the capitalist system. In practice, however, the trade-unionists' activity was a struggle to get better conditions for the sale of labour power. Counting on the revolutionary wing in the British labour movement, Marx and Engels explained to the workers the true meaning of the activity of reformist trade union leaders. In the Inaugural Address of the Working Men's International Association, the report entitled *Wages, Price and Profit* and a number of other works Marx and Engels revealed the essence of capitalist exploitation and showed on the basis of official data that the development of the capitalist system could not and would not lead to radical changes in the position of the workers, and that the trade-unionists' slogan "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work" was in fact a conservative one, inspired by bourgeois political economy.

They showed that the apoliticism preached by the trade union leaders in fact deprived the working class of a real weapon of struggle both for its emancipation and for the improvement of its economic position. Engels wrote that the trade-unionists "...bar all political action ... thus excluding

all participation in any general activity of the working class as a class" (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1975, pp. 300-01), and that in fact this makes workers pawns in the bourgeois political game.

One of the most serious obstacles to the dissemination of scientific revolutionary theory, particularly in the German working-class movement, was Lassalleism. It was in this form that Marx and Engels first encountered reformism of the new type in the 1860s. This trend arose within the working-class movement and was connected with the activity of a political mass organisation, the General Association of German Workers.

The founder of the General Association of German Workers, Ferdinand Lassalle, was personally acquainted with Marx and Engels and conversant with most of their works. But Proudhon's ideas also had a certain influence on him. This manifested itself in the ambiguous role which Lassalle played. On the one hand, he promoted the creation of an independent political organisation of German workers and fought hard against the flirting of bourgeois philanthropists and reformers with the working-class movement. These services of his were recognised by Marx and Engels. On the other hand, they showed that Lassalle's nihilistic attitude to general democratic tasks (the unification of Germany by revolutionary means and the establishment of a bourgeois democratic republic) was causing great harm to the working-class movement. The most harmful were Lassalle's reformist views on the way of building socialism. In fact Lassalle rejected the need for socialist revolution. He thought that through universal suffrage it would be possible to bring about a peaceful transformation of the existing Prussian military and bureaucratic state and to develop co-operation with its help. He believed that socialism could be built in this way.

In practice Lassalle's ideas turned into flirting with the Prussian government. This alliance with reaction greatly angered Marx and Engels. They showed that reaction would never make any significant concessions to the working class and this being so the working class would never be able to achieve even what it could under bourgeois democracy. Although

the Lassalleans represented their political line as purely tactical, for Marx and Engels it was totally unacceptable and caused them to break with Lassalle's newspaper, the *Social-Demokrat*.

An important landmark in the development of the class struggle and the history of the international working-class movement was the Paris Commune. The victory of the proletarian revolution in one of the capital cities of Europe, the existence there for two months of a government of the working people led by the proletariat, and, finally, the cruel repression of the Commune by the combined forces of European reaction left an indelible impression on almost all classes, strata and social groups. For the progressive proletarians the example of the Paris Commune became a permanent reminder of the impossibility of class peace, of the deep gulf which existed between the exploiters and exploited. The achievements, mistakes and failures of the Communards confronted proletarian theoreticians with a number of most important problems concerning the strategy and tactics of the working-class movement. The need for political action by the working class became the subject of heated discussion.

At a session of the London Conference on September 21, 1871, Frederick Engels, quoting the example of the Paris Commune, flatly denied the possibility of total abstention of the proletariat from politics, and described the preaching of this as an attempt to push the workers "into the embrace of bourgeois politics" (p. 61). Engels' statement that "the workers' party must never be the tagtail of any bourgeois party; it must be independent and have its goal and its own policy" (pp. 61-62) was directed against reformism. It soon became clear that these attacks on new attempts to subject the working-class movement to bourgeois influence were most timely. This tendency first appeared in the United States, a fact which was explained by a number of objective and subjective reasons. Twenty years after the events described Engels, in a letter to Friedrich Adolph Sorge of December 31, 1892, admitted that it was strange but natural "how firmly rooted bourgeois prejudices are even in the working class in such a young country which has never known feudalism and

has grown up on a bourgeois basis from the beginning" (p. 324). Six years earlier in a letter to Eduard Bernstein Engels mentioned high wages and a short working day among the reasons for the "still quite middle class stage of thinking" of the American proletariat (p. 301). At the beginning of the 1870s the US bourgeoisie (unlike the European) did not yet feel afraid of the working-class movement and even thought it might be possible to use the American sections of the First International in its own interests. This desire found concrete expression in the activity of the American bourgeois feminists Victoria Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin, who launched the agitation for bourgeois reforms on behalf of the International Working Men's Association. In the conflict which broke out on this point among members of the International in the USA, Marx and Engels unreservedly supported the proletarian wing. In the Resolution on the split in the United States' Federation Marx condemned the sullyng of sections of the International Working Men's Association with alien elements (pp. 63-64.). Engels pointed to the fundamental difference between the aims of American reformists and the true tasks of the International, noting that the former were "to exploit the existing state, and not to overturn the foundations of this state" (p. 70).

The appearance of more and more new projects for a reformist solution of the workers' question or its individual aspects again demanded from the founders of Marxism a precise definition of such phenomena in reformism as bourgeois and petty-bourgeois socialism, and proof of their objective reactionary nature and theoretical invalidity. This task was brilliantly solved by Engels in the work *The Housing Question* which remains of constant importance in the struggle against reformism.

In the period when the mass working-class movement was taking shape Marx and Engels attached great importance to making the proletariat immune to the various types of reformism. This depended largely on the creation of independent proletarian parties and the extent to which they would manage to reflect their working-class nature and make the broad masses of the working people follow them. The founders of Marxism did their utmost to propagate and



explain the decisions of the Hague Congress of the First International (1872), dealing with political action by the proletariat. Denouncing the distortion by British trade union leaders of the meaning of the resolution on political action by the proletariat, Engels again pointed out that its essence lay in the demand for the formation in each country of an independent party of the working class, which would oppose all bourgeois parties. He explained that in Britain the solving of this task would mean the liberation of the proletariat from the influence of the "great Liberal party" (pp. 77-78). Engels had no illusions that this process would develop swiftly in Britain. In a letter to Adolf Hepner of December 30, 1872 he expressed his main point on this matter. The unfavourable prospects, according to Engels, lay in the general weakness of the movement, which was the result of temporary economic prosperity, and in the fact that the only mass proletarian organisations in the British Isles, the trade unions, were by their very nature incapable of becoming the basis for an independent workers' party. Two years later in the article "The English Elections" Engels made an even more detailed examination of the reasons why reformism was so deep-rooted in the British labour movement. He showed that they lay in the fact that the British proletariat had profited to a certain extent from the vast growth of large-scale industry which resulted from Great Britain's predominance on the world market.

Somewhat different was the struggle for the purity of revolutionary proletarian theory in Germany, where by this time there already existed two independent workers' organisations: the Social-Democratic Party (the Eisenachers) that had adopted the platform of the First International, and Lassalle's General Association of German Workers. The most urgent requirement of the country's proletarian movement was to achieve unity. After the Paris Commune, which both the Lassalleans and the Eisenachers supported unanimously, things began to move (although not very quickly) in the direction of the unification of the two parties.

Marx and Engels considered the creation of a united workers' party possible. But they believed that unification

should be based on certain principles, namely, that the Lassalleans renounce their petty-bourgeois ideology and sectarian dogmas and that the principles of scientific communism be accepted as the basis for the united party's general programme. Marx and Engels saw the main threat in the fact that a considerable section of the Social-Democratic Party shared many of Lassalle's erroneous propositions. Given this state of affairs the preservation of the split in the country's working-class movement was less harmful than a unity achieved at the expense of losing the distinct class nature and ideological premises of German Social-Democracy.

Subsequent events confirmed that the fears expressed by the founders of Marxism were well founded. In the programme adopted at the Gotha Unity Congress most of the demands reflected the influence of Lassalle's eclectic and scientifically invalid ideas. Attaching great importance to the programme of the proletarian party as a document that defined its revolutionary, class character, Marx and Engels subjected the compromise with Lassalleanism made by a section of the Eisenachers' leaders to sharp and well-argued criticism.

In the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* Marx demonstrated convincingly the confused and opportunist nature of the Programme's most important demands. He revealed the scientific invalidity of their main source – Lassalle's theoretical premises, which were of a clearly reformist and at the same time utopian nature. That was how Marx assessed Lassalle's idea inserted into the Gotha Programme of the "solving" the social question by means of establishing producers' co-operative societies with state aid.

"It is worthy of Lassalle's imagination," Marx wrote with trenchant irony, "that with state loans one can build a new society just as well as a new railway!" (p. 135). Here we have a precise description of a fundamentally new stage in the development of reformism, which together with an undoubted continuity also shows certain signs and qualities not encountered before in this phenomenon. The serious influence of bourgeois ideas coexists peacefully in it with an undoubted anti-bourgeois spirit. There is a total absence of the tendency

to preserve the small producer or to turn the modern industrial worker into him. Formally what is discussed is not the integration of the proletariat into capitalist society through reforms, but the reformist transformation of this society into a more just one. However, the main feature characteristic of reformism as a whole no matter how its character and forms change still remains, namely, the reactionary hope that it will be possible to change and improve capitalism while avoiding the path of its revolutionary reorganisation.

The compromise at the Gotha Congress created the conditions for the broader entry into the party of elements alien to the proletariat, who brought with them many bourgeois prejudices. The utopian, fantastic ideas of the future structure of society which seemed to have been overcome now began to spread again among the German workers. This, as Marx put it, deprived the German proletariat of a serious theoretical advantage over the workers of other countries (pp. 240-41). As already mentioned above, the utopianism of views on the ways and forms of the possible transformation of society was an integral part of many reformist conceptions. Moreover, in the new historical conditions utopian socialism, "which *before* the era of materialistic critical socialism contained the rudiments of the latter within itself", wrote Marx, "can now ... only be silly, stale, and basically reactionary". (p. 241).

The unification of the two trends of the organised German proletariat, certain successes achieved by the country's working-class movement by legal means, and the growing influence in Social-Democracy of supporters of the various reformist views led, to quote Engels, "to some believing that nothing more" but legal agitation "was needed for final victory of the proletariat". "In a country as poor in revolutionary traditions as Germany" Engels considered this phenomenon to be dangerous. "Fortunately," he continued, "Bismarck's brutal action, and the cowardice of the bourgeoisie who supported it, altered things" (p. 144). The Anti-Socialist Law was introduced against the German Social-Democrats.

\*As Marx and Engels had predicted the law had favourable consequences for the development of the workers' movement

in Germany. It was to complete, as Engels put it, "the revolutionary education of the German workers" (ibid.).<sup>6</sup> The founders of scientific communism realised that this process would take place in a persistent struggle not only against external, but also internal opponents. They considered it perfectly natural that "every workers' party of a big country can develop only through internal struggle, which accords with the laws of dialectical development in general" (p. 288).

After the introduction of the Anti-Socialist Law this struggle in German Social-Democracy originally focused on the political tendency of the Party's central organ, the *Sozial-Demokrat* newspaper, which it was planned to publish in Zurich. Very soon, however, discussion of this problem turned into a discussion on the class nature of the Social-Democratic Party. Karl Höchberg, Carl August Schramm and Eduard Bernstein (the "Three Zurichers") who were involved in the Zurich publication took an openly reformist stand and called for the rejection of revolutionary methods of struggle. They declared that the Germans had made a mistake in turning the socialist movement into a purely working-class movement (the "Three Zurichers" even accused the Lassalleans of this) and had brought down the Anti-Socialist Law on themselves by unnecessary provocation of the bourgeoisie (this was a criticism of the German workers' solidarity with the Paris Commune), and maintained that the movement should be led by bourgeois and educated elements, and that it should be of an exclusively peaceful, reformist nature.

Marx and Engels made a devastating criticism of the Manifesto of the "Three Zurichers" (see the Circular letter to Bebel, Liebknecht and Bracke). They described its members as representatives of the petty bourgeoisie who were afraid that the proletariat "might go too far". The founders of Marxism showed that the Zurich reformists recognised the class struggle on paper, but glossed over it in practice. Marx and Engels described here for the first time one of the most widespread devices of modern reformism, namely, to proclaim the overthrow of the capitalist system as a thing of the distant future of no significance to political practice in the present

day. Hiding behind this thesis, reformists have sought in the past and still do seek to direct the strength and energy of the organised working class "to those petty-bourgeois patchwork reforms which, by providing the old order of society with new props, may perhaps transform the ultimate catastrophe into a gradual, piecemeal and as far as possible peaceful process of dissolution" (pp. 261-62). Apart from the petty-bourgeois origin of the ideas of the "Three Zurichers", Marx and Engels saw that the reformist revelations of its members were based on the theoretical confusion and eclecticism of their ideological beliefs. The founders of scientific communism regarded this as characteristic of a certain category of people who had come from the ruling classes and joined the proletariat. They expressed their utmost amazement at the fact that the Party tolerated the authors of a reformist manifesto in its ranks, and even admitted them to its leadership. Marx and Engels declared that if the tendency to renounce the class struggle and to transfer the task of emancipating the proletariat to bourgeois philanthropists were to gain the upper hand in German Social-Democracy, they would be compelled to condemn its disastrous course publicly (pp. 263-64).

The sharp criticism by the founders of Marxism of the inconsistency and vacillations displayed by the leadership of the German Social-Democratic Party in relation to reformism undoubtedly had a beneficial effect on the Marxist wing, helping it to overcome a certain confusion which arose in the ranks of Social-Democracy after the passing of the Anti-Socialist Law, and to withstand this grave test for the most part in a courageous and well-organised fashion. Engels' reminder of the exemplary behaviour of the French socialists during the cruel repressions that they suffered after the collapse of the Paris Commune rang out as a harsh, sobering reproach (pp. 270-71).

The attacks on reformism by Marx and Engels in the late 1870s and early 1880s not only concerned specific matters of German Social-Democracy, but were also of international importance. This is confirmed by the aggravation at about that time of the struggle between the revolutionary and the reformist wing within the French Workers' Party, which

ended in a split in 1882. Marx and Engels fully supported the firm stand adopted on this question by the supporters of Marxism in France. "The issue is purely one of principle:" Engels wrote to August Bebel on October 28, 1882, "is the struggle to be conducted *as a class struggle* of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, or is it to be permitted that, in good opportunist (or as this is called in the socialist translation: Possibilist) style, the class character of the movement, together with the programme, is to be dropped wherever more votes, more 'adherents', can thereby be won?" (p. 289). Here again we find an analysis of the general, definitive characteristics of reformism: its readiness to sacrifice strategic aims for the sake of small immediate successes, its striving to obscure the class, revolutionary, anti-capitalist nature of the working-class movement and, first and foremost, its leading party. "When one starts a party without a programme, which anyone can join, it is no longer a party," wrote Engels. If "any strike society that, like the English trades unions, only, fights for high wages and short working hours, but otherwise doesn't give a rap for the movement—if all these are counted in the workers' party, one really builds a party for the *maintenance* of wage labour and not for its abolition" (p. 290). Marx and Engels believed that for the sake of preserving the purity of the revolutionary theory of the proletariat, Marxists should not be afraid of a split in the workers' party and should even risk remaining in the minority.

Engels predicted and regarded as desirable such a split between the right and the left wing in German Social-Democracy. Unfortunately this did not take place. Police persecution during the period of the Anti-Socialist Law temporarily revolutionised to some extent even a certain section of the reformist inclined members of the party's leadership. The Marxist elements in it, however, in spite of the instructions of Marx and Engels, did not take their negative attitude to reformism to its logical conclusion—an organisational break with its supporters.

In 1887 in the preface to the second edition of *The Housing Question* Engels notes anxiously "that ... a certain petty-bour-

geois socialism finds representation in the Social-Democratic Party itself, and even in the ranks of the Reichstag group" (p. 167), which means essentially that the main demands of present-day socialism are "declared possible only in the distant future, a future which for all practical purposes is quite out of sight", and immediate tasks are reduced to a "mere social patchwork" (ibid.). And Engels wrote that when the German Social-Democrats were still operating on a semi-legal basis as a party banned by law. The reformist trend in German Social-Democracy was also determined by the objective processes taking place at that time in the country's economic and social life. "The existence of such a tendency," Engels remarked, "is quite inevitable in Germany, the land of philistinism *par excellence*, particularly at a time when industrial development is violently and on a mass scale uprooting this old and deeply-rooted philistinism" (p. 167).

The attempts by reactionary circles in the German empire to put an end to the Social-Democratic movement by passing the Anti-Socialist Law were a complete failure.

The Social-Democrats extended their influence greatly in the masses. However, the strengthening of the Party's positions and the removal of police restrictions also objectively created favourable conditions for the development of opportunism in its midst, particularly reformist opportunism. Engels pointed to this very definitely in 1891 in criticising a draft of the new programme of the German Social-Democratic Party. "Fearing a renewal of the Anti-Socialist Law," he wrote, "they now want the Party to find the present legal order in Germany adequate for putting through all Party demands by peaceful means. These are attempts to convince oneself and the Party that 'present-day society is developing towards socialism'" (pp. 180-81). For the umpteenth time Engels drew the attention of the Social-Democratic leaders to the fact that "this forgetting of the great, the principal considerations for the momentary interests of the day, this struggling and striving for the success of the moment regardless of later consequences, this sacrifice of the future of the movement for its present, may be 'honestly' meant, but it is and remains opportunism, and 'honest'



opportunism is perhaps the most dangerous of all!" (p. 182).

Engels' ideas were of paramount importance for the whole of the international working-class movement, because the danger of opportunism (reformism) did not exist in Germany alone. At the beginning of the 1890s he criticised sharply the ideas and activity of the Fabian Society in Britain, a peculiar off-shoot of old, purely bourgeois reformism. The very fact of the resurgence of this trend on the British Isles did not surprise Engels. Having followed the development of the British labour movement for many years, he was fully aware of its weak points. Engels saw the main defect of proletarian organisations in Britain in their inability to advance beyond the limits of their workshop and the reformist ideas of the old trade unions. He placed his hopes for an upsurge in the labour movement in Britain on the country's loss of its industrial monopoly. This, he believed, would put an end to the privileged position of the British workers and make them more revolutionarily inclined. In the late 1880s and early 1890s Engels saw signs of such a change in the emergence of new trade union organisations in Britain which refused to accept the reformist policy of the old trade-unions. He wanted to believe that this would lead to the creation of an independent workers' party in Britain. In this case the formation and activation of the bourgeois-socialist trend (Fabianism), which was seeking to extend its influence to the as yet weak class consciousness of a section of the British workers seemed far from harmless. In Engels' correspondence we find a true Marxist analysis of the class essence and tasks of the Fabians. He pointed out that the main task of the Fabians was to "convert the *bourgeoisie* to socialism and thus introduce the thing peacefully and constitutionally" (p. 314). To this end the Fabians were doing their utmost to prevent the creation of an independent proletarian party. This was one of the main dividing lines between them and the Marxists. "In our tactics," Engels wrote to Karl Kautsky on September 4, 1892, "one thing is firmly established for all modern countries and times; to convince the workers of the necessity of forming their own independent party, opposed to all bourgeois parties."

Whereas the Fabian Society, to quote Engels, “preached and practised *affiliation of the workers to the Liberals*” (p. 319).

Engels continued to follow carefully the development of the situation in German Social-Democracy, the leading force of the international working-class movement at that time. He invariably supported Marxist elements in the leadership of the Social-Democratic Party and consistently criticised any attempt to propagate opportunist, reformist views in its name. Shortly before his death Engels strongly criticised the position held by the right Social-Democrats led by Vollmar on the peasant question. Unreservedly supporting Bebel’s criticism of this position, Engels showed the fallaciousness and reformist essence of their concept of the peasantry, defined its place in the overall development of reformism and showed that this, as before, was one of the most typical features of right-wing opportunism – the pursuit of immediate success at the expense of renouncing the fundamental propositions of revolutionary theories.

Engels saw the social base for the deep-rootedness of reformism in the Social-Democratic movement in the Party’s extensive growth at the expense of the petty-bourgeois element. At that time, it is true, he regarded the Party as sufficiently strong to assimilate this new addition, although he admitted that it was no easy process.

The subsequent development of the working-class movement has shown that to this very day reformism remains one of the most dangerous enemies of revolutionary Marxist theory. Throughout almost fifty years Marx and Engels consistently condemned all attempts to deprive the working-class movement of its class character and to replace the proletariat’s struggle against capital with compromise and opportunism.

In the modern world, full of acute social contradictions, when the bourgeoisie is having recourse to increasingly refined methods of influencing the minds of certain strata of the proletariat and its allies, reference to the history of the struggle by Marx and Engels against one of the main opportunist trends provides the necessary historical perspective without which a scientific analysis of reformist tendencies is practically impossible.

*N. Kolpinsky*  
*N. Fedorovsky*

**Karl Marx**

From *The Poverty of Philosophy*

The socialists<sup>1</sup> say to the workers: Do not combine, because what will you gain by it anyway? A rise in wages? The economists will prove to you quite clearly that the few ha'pence you may gain by it for a few moments if you succeed, will be followed by a permanent fall. Skilled calculators will prove to you that it would take you years merely to recover, through the increase in your wages, the expenses incurred for the organisation and upkeep of the combinations. And we, as socialists, tell you that, apart from the money question, you will continue nonetheless to be workers, and the masters will still continue to be the masters, just as before. So no combination! No politics! For is not entering into combination engaging in politics?

The economists want the workers to remain in society as it is constituted and as it has been signed and sealed by them in their manuals.

The socialists want the workers to leave the old society alone, the better to be able to enter the new society which they have prepared for them with so much foresight.

In spite of both of them, in spite of manuals and utopias, combination has not ceased for an instant to go forward and grow with the development and growth of modern industry. It has now reached such a stage, that the degree to which combination has developed in any country clearly marks the rank it occupies in the hierarchy of the world market. England, whose industry has attained the highest degree of development, has the biggest and best organised combinations.

In England they have not stopped at partial combinations which have no other objective than a passing strike, and which disappear with it. Permanent combinations have been formed, *trades unions*, which serve as bulwarks for the workers in their struggles with the employers. And at the present time all these local *trades unions* find a rallying point in the *National Association of United Trades*,<sup>2</sup> the central committee of which is in London, and which already numbers 80,000 members. The organisation of these strikes, combinations, and *trades unions* went on simultaneously with the political struggles of the workers, who now constitute a large political party, under the name of *Chartists*....

Large-scale industry concentrates in one place a crowd of people unknown to one another. Competition divides their interests. But the maintenance of wages, this common interest which they have against their boss, unites them in a common thought of resistance—*combination*. The combination always has a double aim, that of stopping competition among the workers, so that they can carry on general competition with the capitalist. If the first aim of resistance was merely the maintenance of wages, combinations, at first isolated, constitute themselves into groups as the capitalists in their turn unite for the purpose of repression, and in face of always united capital, the maintenance of the association becomes more necessary to them than that of wages. This is so true that English economists are amazed to see the workers sacrifice a good part of their wages in favour of associations, which, in the eyes of these economists, are established solely in favour of wages. In this struggle—a veritable civil war—all the elements necessary for a coming battle unite and develop. Once it has reached this point, association takes on a political character.

Economic conditions had first transformed the mass of the people of the country into workers. The domination of capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests. This mass is thus already a class as against capital, but not yet for itself. In the struggle, of which we have pointed out only a few phases, this mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself. The interests it defends become

class interests. But the struggle of class against class is a political struggle.

In the bourgeoisie we have two phases to distinguish: that in which it constituted itself as a class under the regime of feudalism and absolute monarchy, and that in which, already constituted as a class, it overthrew feudalism and monarchy to make society into a bourgeois society. The first of these phases was the longer and necessitated the greater efforts. This too began by partial combinations against the feudal lords.

Much research has been carried out to trace the different historical phases that the bourgeoisie has passed through, from the commune up to its constitution as a class.

But when it is a question of making a precise study of strikes, combinations and other forms in which the proletarians carry out before our eyes their organisation as a class, some are seized with real fear and others display a *transcendental* disdain.

An oppressed class is the vital condition for every society founded on the antagonism of classes. The emancipation of the oppressed class thus implies necessarily the creation of a new society. For the oppressed class to be able to emancipate itself it is necessary that the productive powers already acquired and the existing social relations should no longer be capable of existing side by side. Of all the instruments of production, the greatest productive power is the revolutionary class itself. The organisation of revolutionary elements as a class supposes the existence of all the productive forces which could be engendered in the bosom of the old society.

Does this mean that after the fall of the old society there will be a new class domination culminating in a new political power? No.

The condition for the emancipation of the working class is the abolition of all classes, just as the condition for the emancipation of the third estate, of the bourgeois order, was the abolition of all estates<sup>a</sup> and all orders.

The working class, in the course of its development, will

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<sup>a</sup> "Estates here in the historical sense of the estates of feudalism, estates with definite and limited privileges. The revolution of the bourgeoisie abolished the

substitute for the old civil society an association which will exclude classes and their antagonism, and there will be no more political power properly so-called, since political power is precisely the official expression of antagonism in civil society.

Meanwhile the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is a struggle of class against class, a struggle which carried to its highest expression is a total revolution. Indeed, is it at all surprising that a society founded on the *opposition* of classes should culminate in brutal *contradiction*, the shock of body against body, as its final denouement?

Do not say that social movement excludes political movement. There is never a political movement which is not at the same time social.

It is only in an order of things in which there are no more classes and class antagonisms that *social evolutions* will cease to be *political revolutions*. Till then, on the eve of every general reshuffling of society, the last word of social science will always be:

"Le combat ou la mort; la lutte sanguinaire ou le néant. C'est aussi que la question est invinciblement posée."

George Sand

Written in the first half  
of 1847

K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*,  
Vol. 6, Progress Publishers, Moscow,  
1976, pp. 209-12

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estates and their privileges. Bourgeois society knows only *classes*. It was, therefore, absolutely in contradiction with history to describe the proletariat as the 'fourth estate'." *F.E.* [Note to the German edition, 1883, by F. Engels]

<sup>2</sup> "Combat or death, bloody struggle or extinction. Thus the question is inexorably put." (George Sand, *Jean Ziska. Épisode de la guerre des hussites*. Introduction.) - Ed.

## **Karl Marx and Frederick Engels**

### *From Manifesto of the Communist Party*

#### **Conservative, or Bourgeois, Socialism**

A part of the bourgeoisie is desirous of redressing social grievances, in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society.

To this section belong economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the condition of the working class, organisers of charity, members of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, temperance fanatics, hole-and-corner reformers of every imaginable kind. This form of Socialism has, moreover, been worked out into complete systems.

We may cite Proudhon's *Philosophie de la misère* as an example of this form.

The Socialistic bourgeois want all the advantages of modern social conditions without the struggles and dangers necessarily resulting therefrom. They desire the existing state of society minus its revolutionary and disintegrating elements. They wish for a bourgeoisie without a proletariat. The bourgeoisie naturally conceives the world in which it is supreme to be the best; and bourgeois Socialism develops this comfortable conception into various more or less complete systems. In requiring the proletariat to carry out such a system, and thereby to march straightway into the social New Jerusalem, it but requires in reality, that the proletariat should remain within the bounds of existing society, but should cast away all its hateful ideas concerning the bourgeoisie.

A second and more practical, but less systematic, form of this Socialism sought to depreciate every revolutionary movement in the eyes of the working class, by showing that no

mere political reform, but only a change in the material conditions of existence, in economical relations, could be of any advantage to them. By changes in the material conditions of existence, this form of Socialism, however, by no means understands abolition of the bourgeois relations of production, an abolition that can be effected only by a revolution, but administrative reforms, based on the continued existence of these relations; reforms, therefore, that in no respect affect the relations between capital and labour, but, at the best, lessen the cost, and simplify the administrative work, of bourgeois government.

Bourgeois Socialism attains adequate expression, when, and only when, it becomes a mere figure of speech.

Free trade: for the benefit of the working class. Protective duties: for the benefit of the working class. Prison Reform: for the benefit of the working class. This is the last word and the only seriously meant word of bourgeois Socialism.

It is summed up in the phrase: the bourgeois is a bourgeois—for the benefit of the working class.

Written in December  
1847-January 1848

K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*,  
Vol. 6, pp. 513-14



## Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

### From *Review*

The present organisation of the Chartist Party is similarly in a state of dissolution. The members of the petty bourgeoisie who still adhere to the party, together with the labour aristocracy, form a purely democratic faction whose programme is limited to the People's Charter and a number of other petty-bourgeois reforms. The mass of the workers who live in truly proletarian conditions belong to the revolutionary Chartist faction. The leader of the former faction is Feargus O'Connor, and the leaders of the latter are Julian Harney and Ernest Jones. The elderly O'Connor, an Irish squire and self-styled descendant of the old kings of Munster, is a true representative of Old England, despite his origin and his political tendencies. His whole nature is conservative and he most emphatically hates both industrial progress and revolution. All his ideals are patriarchal and petty-bourgeois to the core. He unites in himself countless contradictions which are resolved and harmonised in the form of a certain banal common sense<sup>a</sup> and which enable him year in, year out to write his endless weekly letters in *The Northern Star*,<sup>3</sup> each of which is in open conflict with its predecessor. And that is precisely why O'Connor claims to be the most consistent man in the three kingdoms and to have predicted every event for the past twenty years. His shoulders, his bellowing voice, his enormous skill as a boxer, with which he is reputed to have once held his own against over twenty thousand people at Nottingham

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<sup>a</sup> The authors give the words "common sense" in English.—Ed.

market, all make him a typical representative of Old England. It is obvious that a man like O'Connor is bound to be a great obstacle in a revolutionary movement: but such people are useful precisely because with them and against them a number of ingrained prejudices are frittered away, and because the movement, if it eventually prevails against these people, is once and for all rid also of the prejudices they represent. O'Connor's fate is sealed in the movement, but for that reason he will be able to lay claim to the title of a "martyr to the good cause" with as much right as Messrs. Lamartine and Marrast.

Written on November 1,  
1850

K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*,  
Vol. 10, 1978, pp. 514-15

## Karl Marx

### *From Inaugural Address of the Working Men's International Association*<sup>4</sup>

...Indeed, with local colours changed, and on a scale somewhat contracted, the English facts reproduce themselves in all the industrious and progressive countries of the Continent. In all of them there has taken place, since 1848, an unheard-of development of industry, and an undreamed-of expansion of imports and exports. In all of them "the augmentation of wealth and power entirely confined to classes of property" was truly "intoxicating." In all of them, as in England, a minority of the working classes got their real wages somewhat advanced; while in most cases the monetary rise of wages denoted no more a real access of comforts than the inmate of the metropolitan poor-house or orphan asylum, for instance, was in the least benefited by his first necessities costing £ 9 15s. 8d. in 1861 against £ 7 7s. 4d. in 1852. Everywhere the great mass of the working classes were sinking down to a lower depth, at the same rate, at least, that those above them were rising in the social scale. In all countries of Europe it has now become a truth demonstrable to every unprejudiced mind, and only denied by those, whose interest it is to hedge other people in a fool's paradise, that no improvement of machinery, no appliance of science to production, no contrivances of communication, no new colonies, no emigration, no opening of markets, no free trade, nor all these things put together, will do away with the miseries of the industrious masses; but that, on the present false base, every fresh development of the productive powers of labour must tend to deepen social contrasts and point social antagonisms. Death of

starvation rose almost to the rank of an institution, during this intoxicating epoch of economical progress, in the metropolis of the British Empire. That epoch is marked in the annals of the world by the quickened return, the widening compass, and the deadlier effect of the social pest called a commercial and industrial crisis.

After the failure of the Revolutions of 1848, all party organisations and party journals of the working classes were, on the Continent, crushed by the iron hand of force, the most advanced sons of labour fled in despair to the Transatlantic Republic, and the short-lived dreams of emancipation vanished before an epoch of industrial fever, moral marasme, and political reaction. The defeat of the Continental working classes, partly owed to the diplomacy of the English Government, acting then as now in fraternal solidarity with the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, soon spread its contagious effects to this side of the Channel. While the rout of their Continental brethren unmanned the English working classes, and broke their faith in their own cause, it restored to the landlord and the money-lord their somewhat shaken confidence. They insolently withdrew concessions already advertised. The discoveries of new goldlands led to an immense exodus, leaving an irreparable void in the ranks of the British proletariat. Others of its formerly active members were caught by the temporary bribe of greater work and wages, and turned into "political blacks". All the efforts made at keeping up, or remodelling, the Chartist Movement, failed signally; the press organs of the working class died one by one of the apathy of the masses, and, in point of fact, never before seemed the English working class so thoroughly reconciled to a state of political nullity. If, then, there had been no solidarity of action between the British and the Continental working classes, there was, at all events, a solidarity of defeat.

And yet the period passed since the Revolutions of 1848 has not been without its compensating features. We shall here only point to two great facts.

After a thirty years' struggle, fought with most admirable perseverance, the English working classes, improving a mo-

mentaneous split between the landlords and money-lords, succeeded in carrying the Ten Hours' Bill.<sup>5</sup> The immense physical, moral and intellectual benefits hence accruing to the factory operatives, half-yearly chronicled in the reports of the inspectors of factories, are now acknowledged on all sides. Most of the Continental governments had to accept the English Factory Act in more or less modified forms, and the English Parliament itself is every year compelled to enlarge its sphere of action. But besides its practical import, there was something else to exalt the marvellous success of this working men's measure. Through their most notorious organs of science, such as Dr. Ure, Professor Senior, and other sages of that stamp, the middle class had predicted, and to their heart's content proved, that any legal restriction of the hours of labour must sound the death knell of British industry, which, vampyre like, could but live by sucking blood, and children's blood, too. In olden times, child murder was a mysterious rite of the religion of Moloch, but it was practised on some very solemn occasions only, once a year perhaps, and then Moloch had no exclusive bias for the children of the poor. This struggle about the legal restriction of the hours of labour raged the more fiercely since, apart from frightened avarice, it told indeed upon the great contest between the blind rule of the supply and demand laws which form the political economy of the middle class, and social production controlled by social foresight, which forms the political economy of the working class. Hence the Ten Hours' Bill was not only a great practical success; it was the victory of a principle; it was the first time that in broad daylight the political economy of the middle class succumbed to the political economy of the working class.

But there was in store a still greater victory of the political economy of labour over the political economy of property. We speak of the co-operative movement, especially the co-operative factories raised by the unassisted efforts of a few bold "hands". The value of these great social experiments cannot be overrated. By deed, instead of by argument, they have shown that production on a large scale, and in accord with

the behests of modern science, may be carried on without the existence of a class of masters employing a class of hands; that to bear fruit, the means of labour need not be monopolised as a means of dominion over, and of extortion against, the labouring man himself; and that, like slave labour, like serf labour, hired labour is but a transitory and inferior form, destined to disappear before associated labour plying its toil with a willing hand, a ready mind, and a joyous heart. In England, the seeds of the co-operative system were sown by Robert Owen; the working men's experiments, tried on the Continent, were, in fact, the practical upshot of the theories, not invented, but loudly proclaimed, in 1848.

At the same time, the experience of the period from 1848 to 1864 has proved beyond doubt that, however excellent in principle, and however useful in practice, co-operative labour, if kept within the narrow circle of the casual efforts of private workmen, will never be able to arrest the growth in geometrical progression of monopoly, to free the masses, nor even to perceptibly lighten the burden of their miseries. It is perhaps for this very reason that plausible noblemen, philanthropic middle-class spouters, and even keen political economists, have all at once turned nauseously complimentary to the very co-operative labour system they had vainly tried to nip in the bud by deriding it as the Utopia of the dreamer, or stigmatising it as the sacrilege of the Socialist. To save the industrious masses, co-operative labour ought to be developed to national dimensions, and consequently, to be fostered by national means. Yet, the lords of land and the lords of capital will always use their political privileges for the defence and perpetuation of their economical monopolies. So far from promoting, they will continue to lay every possible impediment in the way of the emancipation of labour. Remember the sneer with which, last session, Lord Palmerston put down the advocates of the Irish Tenants' Right Bill. The House of Commons, cried he, is a house of landed proprietors.<sup>6</sup>

• To conquer political power has therefore become the great duty of the working classes. They seem to have comprehended this, for in England, Germany, Italy, and France there have

taken place simultaneous revivals, and simultaneous efforts are being made at the political reorganisation of the working men's party.

One element of success they possess—numbers; but numbers weigh only in the balance, if united by combination and led by knowledge. Past experience has shown how disregard of that bond of brotherhood which ought to exist between the workmen of different countries, and incite them to stand firmly by each other in all their struggle for emancipation, will be chastised by the common discomfiture of their incoherent efforts. This thought prompted the working men of different countries assembled on September 28, 1864, in public meeting at St. Martin's Hall, to found the International Association.

Written between October  
21 and 27, 1864

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969, pp. 14-17

Karl Marx

• *On Proudhon*

(Letter to J. B. Schweitzer)

London, January 24, 1865

Dear Sir,

Yesterday I received a letter in which you request of me a detailed judgement of *Proudhon*. Lack of time prevents me from meeting your desire. Furthermore, I have *none* of his works by me. However, in order to show you my good will I am hastily jotting down a brief sketch. You can then supplement, add, omit—in short, do anything you like with it.<sup>a</sup>

Proudhon's earliest efforts I no longer remember. His school work about a *Universal Language*<sup>8</sup> shows how little he hesitated to attack problems for the solution of which he lacked even the rudiments of knowledge.

His first work, *What Is Property?*,<sup>9</sup> is by all means his best work. It is epoch-making, if not for the newness of its content, then at least for the new and audacious way in which old things are said. In the works of the French Socialists and Communists whom he knew, "property" had, of course, been not only criticised in various ways but also "*abolished*" in the utopian manner. In this book Proudhon's relation to Saint-Simon and Fourier is about the same as that of Feuerbach to Hegel. Compared with Hegel, Feuerbach is exceedingly poor. All the same he was epoch-making *after* Hegel, because he laid *stress* on certain points which are disagreeable to the Christian consciousness while important for the progress of criticism, and which Hegel had left in mystic semi-obscurity.

In this book of Proudhon's there still prevails, if I may be allowed the expression, a strong muscular style. And its style is in my opinion its chief merit. One sees that even where he is only reproducing old stuff, Proudhon makes independent discoveries; that what he is saying was new to him himself and ranks as new. Provocative defiance, laying hands on the

<sup>a</sup> We found it better to print the letter *without any changes*, [Note by the Editorial Board of the newspaper "*Social-Demokrat*."]'



economic "holy of holies", superb paradox which makes a mock of bourgeois common sense, withering criticism, bitter irony, and, betrayed here and there, a deep and genuine feeling of indignation at the infamy of what exists, revolutionary earnestness—because of all this *What Is Property?* had an electrifying effect and produced a great impression upon its first appearance. In a strictly scientific history of political economy the book would hardly be worth mentioning. But sensational works of this kind play their part in the sciences just as much as in polite literature. Take, for instance, Malthus' book *On Population*.<sup>10</sup> In its first edition it was nothing but a "sensational pamphlet" and plagiarism from beginning to end into the bargain. And yet what a stimulus was produced by this *libel on the human race!*

If I had Proudhon's book before me I could easily give a few examples to illustrate his *first manner*. In the passages which he himself regarded as the most important he imitates Kant's treatment of the *antinomies*—Kant, at that time the only German philosopher with whom he was acquainted from translations—and leaves one under the strong impression that to him, as to Kant, the resolution of the antinomies is something "*beyond*" the human understanding, that is, something about which his own understanding remains in the dark.

But in spite of all his sham storming of heaven, one already finds in *What Is Property?* the contradiction that Proudhon, on the one hand, criticises society from the standpoint and with the eyes of a French small-holding peasant (later petty bourgeois) and, on the other, applies the measuring rod he had inherited from the Socialists.

The deficiency of the book is indicated by its very title. The question was so erroneously posed that it could not be answered correctly. *Ancient "property relations"* found their doom in *feudal* property relations, and these in "*bourgeois*" property relations. Thus history itself had practised its criticism upon past *property relations*. With Proudhon the issue really was *modern bourgeois property* as it exists today. The question of what this is could only be answered by a critical analysis of "*political economy*", embracing these *property relations* as a whole, not

in their *legal* expression as *relations of volition* but in their real form, that is, as *relations of production*. But as Proudhon entangled the whole of these economic relations in the general juristic conception of "*property*", he could not get beyond the answer which *Brissot*, in a similar work,<sup>11</sup> had already, before 1789, given in the same words: "Property is theft."

The most that can be got out of this is that the bourgeois juristic conceptions of "*theft*" apply equally well to the "*honest*" gains of the bourgeois himself. On the other hand, since "*theft*" as a forcible violation of property *presupposes property*, Proudhon entangled himself in all sorts of figments of the imagination, obscure even to himself, about *true bourgeois property*.

During my stay in Paris in 1844 I came into personal contact with Proudhon. I mention this here because to a certain extent I am also to blame for his "*sophistication*", as the English call the adulteration of articles of commerce. In the course of lengthy debates, often lasting all night, I infected him to his great injury with Hegelianism, which, owing to his lack of German, he could not study properly. After my expulsion from Paris Herr *Karl Grün* continued what I had begun. As a teacher of German philosophy he had, besides, the advantage over me that he understood nothing about it himself.

Shortly before the appearance of Proudhon's second important work, *The Philosophy of Poverty, etc.*,<sup>12</sup> he announced this to me himself in a very circumstantial letter in which he said, among other things: "I await your stern criticism." This soon fell upon him (in my *Poverty of Philosophy, etc., Paris 1847*<sup>a</sup>) in a fashion which ended our friendship for ever.

From what I have said here you will see that Proudhon's *Philosophy of Poverty or System of Economic Contradictions* first actually contained the answer to the question, "*What Is Property?*" In fact it was only after the publication of this work that he had begun his economic studies; he had discovered that the question he had raised could not be answered by *inveective*, but only by an *analysis* of modern "*political economy*". At the same time he attempted to present the *system* of economic

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<sup>a</sup> K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 105-212.—Ed.

categories dialectically. In place of the insoluble *Kantian* "antinomies" the *Hegelian* "contradiction" was to be introduced as the means of development.

For an estimate of his book, which is in two fat tomes, I must refer you to the work I wrote as a reply. There I showed, among other things, how little he had penetrated into the secret of scientific dialectics; how, on the other hand, he shares the illusions of speculative philosophy, for *instead of conceiving the economic categories as theoretical expressions of historical relations of production, corresponding to a particular stage of development of material production*, he garbles them into pre-existing, eternal ideas; and how in this roundabout way he arrives once more at the standpoint of bourgeois economy.<sup>a</sup>

I also show further how absolutely deficient and in parts even schoolboyish his knowledge is of the "political economy" which he undertook to criticise, and how he and the utopians are hunting for a so-called "science" by which a formula for the "solution of the social question" is to be excogitated *a priori*, instead of deriving science from a critical knowledge of the historical movement, a movement which itself produces the *material conditions of emancipation*. But special mention is made of how confused, wrong and half-baked Proudhon's ideas remain with regard to the basis of the whole thing, *exchange value*, and how he even mistakes the utopian interpretation of *Ricardo's* theory of value for the basis of a new science. With regard to his general point of view I make the following comprehensive judgement:

"Every economic relation has a good and a bad side; this is the only point on which M. Proudhon does not give himself the lie. He sees the good side stressed by the economists; he sees the bad side denounced by the Socialists. From the economists he borrows the necessity of eternal relations; from

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<sup>a</sup> "When they say that present-day relations—the relations of bourgeois production—are *natural*, the economists imply that these are the relations in which wealth is created and productive forces developed in conformity with the laws of nature. Thus these relations are themselves *natural laws* independent of the influence of time. They are *eternal laws* which must always govern society. Thus there has been history, but there is no longer any." (P. 113 of my work.) [Note by Marx.] (K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 174.—Ed.)

the Socialists he borrows the illusion that in poverty there is nothing to be seen but poverty (instead of seeing in it the revolutionary, subversive aspect which will overthrow the old society<sup>a</sup>). He agrees with them both in his attempts to cite the authority of science in his support. Science reduces itself for him to the slender proportions of a scientific formula; he is a hunter after formulae. M. Proudhon accordingly flatters himself that he has made a criticism both of political economy and of communism—he stands below both. Below the economists, because as a philosopher who has at his elbow a magic formula he thinks he can dispense with going into purely economic details; below the Socialists, because he has neither enough courage nor enough insight to lift himself, if only speculatively, above the bourgeois horizon. He wants to soar as the man of science above the bourgeois and the proletarians; *he is nothing but the petty bourgeois* perpetually tossed about between capital and labour, between political economy and communism.”<sup>b</sup>

Severe though the above judgement sounds I must still endorse every word of it today. Simultaneously, however, it must be remembered that at the time when I declared his book to be the code of socialism of the petty bourgeois and proved this theoretically, Proudhon was still being branded as an ultra-arch-revolutionist alike by the political economists and by the Socialists. That is also the reason why I never joined in the outcry later on about his “*treason*” to the revolution. Originally misunderstood by others as well as by himself, it was not his fault if he disappointed unjustified hopes.

In *The Philosophy of Poverty* all the defects of Proudhon’s method of presentation stand out very unfavourably in comparison with *What Is Property?* The style is often what the French call *ampoulé*<sup>c</sup> High-sounding speculative jargon, supposed to be German-philosophical, appears regularly on the scene when his Gallic acumen fails him. A puffing, self-glorify-

<sup>a</sup> The sentence in brackets has been added by Marx in this article. —Ed.

<sup>b</sup> I. c., pp. 119/20. [Note by Marx.] (K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 178. —Ed.)

<sup>c</sup> Bombastic. —Ed.

ing, boastful tone, and especially the twaddle about “science” and sham display of it, which are always so unedifying, are continually dinning in one’s ears. Instead of the genuine warmth which glowed in his first piece of writing, here certain passages are systematically worked up by rhetoric into a momentary fever heat. Add to this the clumsy, repellent display of erudition of the self-taught, whose innate pride in original, independent thought has already been broken and who now, as a *parvenu* of science, deems it necessary to flaunt what he neither is nor has. Then the mentality of the petty bourgeois, who in an indecently brutal way—and neither poignantly nor profoundly nor yet correctly—attacks a man like *Cabet*, to be respected for his practical attitude towards the French proletariat,<sup>13</sup> while being civil, on the other hand, to a man like *Dunoyer* (a State Councillor, to be sure); and yet the whole importance of this *Dunoyer* lay in the comic seriousness with which, throughout three bulging, unbearably boring volumes,<sup>14</sup> he preached the rigourism characterised by *Helvétius* as follows: it is demanded that the unfortunate should be perfect.

The February Revolution<sup>15</sup> certainly came at a very inconvenient moment for Proudhon, as he had irrefutably proved only a few weeks before that “the era of revolutions” was past for ever. His utterances in the National Assembly, however little insight they showed into existing conditions, were worthy of every praise.<sup>16</sup> After the June insurrection they were an act of great courage. In addition they had the fortunate consequence that M. *Thiers*, by his speech opposing Proudhon’s proposals,<sup>17</sup> which was then issued as a special publication, proved to the whole of Europe what infantile catechism served this spiritual pillar of the French bourgeoisie as his pedestal. Indeed, compared to M. *Thiers*, *Proudhon* swelled until he was the size of an antediluvian colossus.

Proudhon’s discovery of “free credit” and the “people’s bank” based upon it were his last economic “deeds”. In my book, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Part I*, Berlin 1859 (pp. 59-64),<sup>a</sup> may be found the proof that the

<sup>a</sup> K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, pp. 80-86.—Ed.

theoretical basis of his idea arises from a failure to understand the first elements of bourgeois "political economy", namely, of the relation between *commodities* and *money*, while the practical superstructure was simply a reproduction of much older and far better developed schemes. That under definite economic and political circumstances the credit system can serve to hasten the emancipation of the working class, just as, for instance, at the beginning of the eighteenth, and again later, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in England, it served to transfer the wealth of one class to another, is beyond the slightest doubt self-evident. But to regard *interest-bearing capital* as the *main form of capital*, but to want to make a special application of the credit system, the alleged abolition of interest, the basis for a transformation of society, is a thoroughly *philistine* fantasy. Hence this fantasy, eked out further, is in fact already to be found among the *economic spokesmen of the English lower middle class in the seventeenth century*. Proudhon's polemic with Bastiat (1850) about interest-bearing capital<sup>18</sup> is on a far lower level than *The Philosophy of Poverty*. He contrives to get himself beaten even by Bastiat and breaks into burlesque bluster when his opponent drives his blows home.

A few years ago Proudhon—at the instance, I think, of the government of Lausanne—wrote a prize essay on "*Taxation*".<sup>19</sup> Here the last flicker of genius is extinguished. Nothing remains but the petty bourgeois pure and simple.

So far as his political and philosophical writings are concerned they all show the same contradictory, dual character as his economic works. Moreover their value is local, confined to France. Nevertheless his attacks on religion, the church, etc., were of great merit locally at a time when the French Socialists deemed fit to be superior in religiosity to the bourgeois Voltairianism of the eighteenth century and the German godlessness of the nineteenth. If Peter the Great defeated Russian barbarism by barbarity, Proudhon did his best to vanquish French phrase-mongering by phrases.

• His work on the "*coup d'état*",<sup>20</sup> in which he flirts with L. Bonaparte and, in fact, strives to make him palatable to the French workers, and his last work, written against

*Poland*,<sup>21</sup> in which for the greater glory of the tsar he indulges in the most imbecile cynicism, must be characterised as not merely bad but base productions; of a baseness which corresponds, however, to the petty-bourgeois point of view."

*Proudhon* has often been compared to *Rousseau*. Nothing could be more mistaken. He is more like *Nic. Linguet*, whose *Theory of Civil Law*,<sup>22</sup> by the way, is a very brilliant book.

*Proudhon* had a natural inclination for dialectics. But as he never grasped really scientific dialectics he never got further than sophistry. In fact this hung together with his petty-bourgeois point of view. Like the historian *Raumer*, the petty bourgeois is composed of on-the-one-hand and on-the-other-hand. This is so in his economic interests and *therefore* in his politics, in his religious, scientific and artistic views. So in his morals, in everything. He is a living contradiction. If, like *Proudhon*, he is in addition a clever man, he will soon learn to play with his own contradictions and develop them according to circumstances into striking, spectacular, now scandalous, now brilliant paradoxes. Charlatanism in science and accommodation in politics are inseparable from such a point of view. There remains only one governing motive, the *vanity* of the subject, and the only question for him, as for all vain people, is the success of the moment, the sensation of the day. Thus the simple ethical tact, which always kept a *Rousseau*, for instance, far from even the semblance of compromise with the powers-that-be, necessarily fades out of existence.

Perhaps posterity will epitomise the latest phase of French development by saying that Louis Bonaparte was its Napoleon and *Proudhon* its Rousseau-Voltaire.

You must now assume responsibility yourself for having saddled me, so soon after the man's death, with the role of post-mortem judge.

Yours very truly,  
*Karl Marx* •

Written on January 24,  
1865

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 24-30

## Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

- *To the Editorial Board  
of the "Social-Demokrat"*<sup>23</sup>

### Statement

In No. 16 of your paper Mr. M. Hess in Paris casts suspicion on the *French members*, who are entirely unknown to him, of the *Central Council in London* of the International Working Men's Association by writing:

"It is indeed, quite inconceivable why it should matter that a few friends of the *Palais Royal*<sup>24</sup> also belong to the *London Association*, for it is a public one," etc.

In an earlier issue, in a chat about the paper *L'Association*,<sup>25</sup> this same Mr. M. Hess made a similar insinuation against the *Parisian friends* of the London Council. We declare that his insinuations are absurd slanders.

By the way, we are glad that this incident has confirmed our conviction that the Paris proletariat continues to be irreconcilably opposed to Bonapartism, in both its forms, the form of the *Tuileries*<sup>26</sup> and the form of the *Palais Royal*, and that it never contemplated selling its historical honour (or shall we say "its historical birthright as the protagonist of the revolution" instead of "*its historical honour*"?) for a mess of pottage. We recommend to the German workers that they follow this example.

London and Manchester

Written on February 6,  
1865

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975,  
p. 152



## Frederick Engels

### From *The Prussian Military Question* and the German Workers' Party

Even in the extreme case, that the bourgeoisie, from fear of the workers, hide behind the skirts of reaction and call on the power of elements hostile to them for protection against the workers, even then the workers' party will have no other choice than to carry on the agitation betrayed by the middle class for civil liberty, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and freedom of association, in spite of the bourgeoisie. Without these freedoms, it cannot itself act freely; in this struggle it is fighting for something vital to its own existence, for the air it needs in order to breathe.

It goes without saying that in all these cases the workers' party should not just act as the tail of the bourgeoisie, but as an independent party quite separate from them. It should remind the bourgeoisie on each occasion that the workers' class interests are directly the opposite of the capitalists', and that the workers are aware of that. It should hold fast to, and build, its own organisation vis-à-vis the bourgeoisie's party organisation, and only negotiate with the latter as one power with another. In that way it would gain a position of respect that would make the individual workers clear about their class interests, and be ready to act in the next revolutionary storm—and these storms are now as regularly recurrent as trade crises and equinoctial storms.

Written between the end  
of January and February  
11, 1865

Translated from the German

•From the *Statement of the Reasons*  
for His Break with "*Social-Demokrat*"

At the beginning of *January 1865*, after the confiscation of one of the first issues of *Social-Demokrat*, I congratulated Herr von Schweitzer on the event, adding that he should openly break with the Ministry.<sup>27</sup>

On the news of *Proudhon's* death he asked for an article on Proudhon. I complied with his wish by return of post, taking the opportunity at the same time, however, to characterise "any compromise however apparent with the powers that be" in his own paper, as a breach "of simple moral tact" and Proudhon's flirting with L. Bonaparte after the coup d'état as a "dirty trick".<sup>a</sup> At the same time *Engels* sent him the translation of an Old Danish country song, in order in the commentary to impress on the readers of *Social-Demokrat* the necessity to fight the squirearchy.

During the same *January*, however, I again had to protest at Herr von Schweitzer's "tactics".<sup>28</sup> He answered on *February 4*:

"As regards our tactics, I ask you to bear in mind how difficult our situation is. We have by all means to try first to *get strong*", etc.

At the *end of January* Engels and I were forced by an insinuation of *Social-Demokrat's* Paris correspondent to make a statement<sup>b</sup> in which we said *inter alia* that we were pleased to find our opinion confirmed that "the Paris proletariat is as

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<sup>a</sup> See present edition, p. 46.—*Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> See present edition, p. 47.—*Ed.*

implacably opposed as ever to Bonapartism in both its forms—that of the Tuileries and that of the Palais-Royal—and has not at any time thought of selling its historical birthright as champion of revolution for a mess of pottage”. The statement closed with the words: “We recommend to the German workers that they follow this example.”

The Paris correspondent had meantime corrected his previous remarks in No. 21 of *Social-Demokrat* and so deprived our statement of immediate purpose. We therefore bore with Herr von Schweitzer’s refusal to publish it. But at the same time I wrote to him that “we shall express our view on the attitude of the workers to the Prussian Government in detail elsewhere”. Finally, I made a last attempt to explain the wretchedness of his “*tactics*”, if he was sincere about them,<sup>29</sup> from a *practical example*, the *coalition question*. He replied on February 15:

“If you want to give me enlightenment, as in your last, on *theoretical (!) questions*, I shall gratefully accept such *instruction* on your part. But as for the *practical question of the tactics of the moment*, I ask you to bear in mind that one must be at the centre of the movement in order to judge these matters. You therefore do us wrong if you *express your dissatisfaction with our tactics anywhere and in any way*. You may only do that when you know the circumstances well enough. Also do not forget that the General Association of German Workers<sup>30</sup> is a consolidated body and that it remains bound to a certain degree by *its traditions*. Things are always impeded *in concreto* by burdens of some sort.”

Engels’ and my open declaration of secession is the answer to this Schweitzer ultimatum.

Karl Marx

London, March 15, 1865

Translated from the German

•From *Wages, Price and Profit*

•

These few hints will suffice to show that the very development of modern industry must progressively turn the scale in favour of the capitalist against the working man, and that consequently the general tendency of capitalistic production is not to raise, but to sink the average standard of wages, or to push the *value of labour* more or less to its *minimum limit*. Such being the tendency of *things* in this system, is this saying that the working class ought to renounce their resistance against the encroachments of capital, and abandon their attempts at making the best of the occasional chances for their temporary improvement? If they did, they would be degraded to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation. I think I have shown that their struggles for the standard of wages are incidents inseparable from the whole wages system, that in 99 cases out of 100 their efforts at raising wages are only efforts at maintaining the given value of labour, and that the necessity of debating their price with the capitalist is inherent in their condition of having to sell themselves as commodities. By cowardly giving way in their everyday conflict with capital, they would certainly disqualify themselves for the initiating of any larger movement.

At the same time, and quite apart from the general servitude involved in the wages system, the working class ought not to exaggerate to themselves the ultimate working of these everyday struggles. They ought not to forget that they are

fighting with effects, but not with the causes of those effects; that they are retarding the downward movement, but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought, therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerilla fights incessantly springing up from the never-ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand that, with all the miseries it imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the *material conditions* and the *social forms* necessary for an economical reconstruction of society. Instead of the *conservative* motto, "*A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!*" they ought to inscribe on their banner the *revolutionary* watchword, "*Abolition of the wages system!*"

After this very long and, I fear, tedious exposition which I was obliged to enter into to do some justice to the subject-matter, I shall conclude by proposing the following resolutions:

Firstly. A general rise in the rate of wages would result in a fall of the general rate of profit, but, broadly speaking, not affect the prices of commodities.

Secondly. The general tendency of capitalist production is not to raise, but to sink the average standard of wages.

Thirdly. Trades Unions work well as centres of resistance against the encroachments of capital. They fail partially from an injudicious use of their power. They fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it, instead of using their organised forces as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class, that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wages system.

Written between the end  
of May and June 27, 1865

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 74-76

**Karl Marx**

• From *Instructions for the Delegates  
of the Provisional General Council.  
The Different Questions*

•

### **Trades' Unions. Their Past, Present and Future**

#### **(a) Their past.**

Capital is concentrated social force, while the workman has only to dispose of his working force. The *contract* between capital and labour can therefore never be struck on equitable terms, equitable even in the sense of a society which places the ownership of the material means of life and labour on one side and the vital productive energies on the opposite side. The only social power of the workmen is their number. The force of numbers, however, is broken by disunion. The disunion of the workmen is created and perpetuated by their *unavoidable competition amongst themselves*.

Trades' Unions originally sprang up from the *spontaneous* attempts of workmen at removing or at least checking that competition, in order to conquer such terms of contract as might raise them at least above the condition of mere slaves. The immediate object of Trades' Unions was therefore confined to everyday necessities, to expediencies for the obstruction of the incessant encroachments of capital, in one word, to questions of wages and time of labour. This activity of the Trades' Unions is not only legitimate, it is necessary. It cannot be dispensed with so long as the present system of production lasts. On the contrary, it must be generalised by the formation and the combination of Trades' Unions throughout all countries. On the other hand, unconsciously to themselves, the Trades' Unions were forming *centres of organisation* of the

working class, as the medieval municipalities and communes did for the middle class. If the Trades' Unions are required for the guerilla fights between capital and labour, they are still more important as *organised agencies for superseding the very system of wages labour and capital rule.*

(b) Their present.

Too exclusively bent upon the local and immediate struggles with capital, the Trades' Unions have not yet fully understood their power of acting against the system of wages slavery itself. They therefore kept too much aloof from general social and political movements. Of late, however, they seem to awaken to some sense of their great historical mission, as appears, for instance, from their participation, in England, in the recent political movement,<sup>31</sup> from the enlarged views taken of their function in the United States,<sup>32</sup> and from the following resolution passed at the recent great conference of Trades' delegates at Sheffield:

"That this conference, fully appreciating the efforts made by the International Association to unite in one common bond of brotherhood the working men of all countries, most earnestly recommend to the various societies here represented, the advisability of becoming affiliated to that body, believing that it is essential to the progress and prosperity of the entire working community."<sup>33</sup>

(c) Their future.

Apart from their original purposes, they must now learn to act deliberately as organising centres of the working class in the broad interest of its *complete emancipation*. They must aid every social and political movement tending in that direction. Considering themselves and acting as the champions and representatives of the whole working class, they cannot fail to enlist the non-society men into their ranks. They must look carefully after the interests of the worst paid trades, such as the agricultural labourers, rendered powerless by exceptional circumstances. They must convince the world at large that their efforts, far from being narrow and selfish, aim at the emancipation of the downtrodden millions.

Written at the end  
of August 1866

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 82-83

## Frederick Engels

- From *Report on the Colliers' Lodges of the Mineworkers of the Collieries of Saxony*

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As a result of the agitation among the miners a *provisional draft statute* for uniting the colliers' lodges of all the Saxony collieries has recently been published (Zwickau, 1869). It is the work of a workers' committee under the chairmanship of Herr J. G. Dinter. The main points are the following: 1) All lodges are to unite in one common lodge. 2) Members to retain their title so long as they live in Germany and pay their dues. 3) A general meeting of all adult members constitutes the highest authority; it elects an executive committee, etc. 4) The mineowner's contribution to the lodge's funds should be half of the contributions paid by his workers.

This draft in no way expresses the views of the most intelligent mineworkers of Saxony. It comes rather from a section that wants to reform with the leave of capital. It bears the hallmark of the unpractical on its brow. How naive, indeed, is the proposition that the capitalists, the former unlimited autocrats of the colliers' lodges, would surrender their power to a democratic general meeting of the workers, and all the same pay dues! Its *basic fault* is precisely that the capitalists *contribute at all*. While that holds the running of the lodge and its funds cannot be taken out of their hands. To be real workers' associations the lodges must be based exclusively on workers' dues. Only that way can they become trades unions that defend the individual worker from the whims of the individual master collier. Can the insignificant and ambiguous



advantages that the capitalist's contributions offer ever outweigh the state of bondage to which they reduce the workers? Let the Saxon miners always bear in mind: however much the capitalist pays into the lodge funds, *he will save as much and more from wages*. Societies of this sort have the peculiar effect that they *suspend the law of supply and demand to the exclusive advantage of the capitalist*. In other words, they depress wages even *below* their ordinary average level through the *unlimited* hold they give capital over the individual worker.

Then should the workers give the remaining funds—i.e. after settlement of the acquired rights—as a gift to the capitalists? This question can only be solved *judicially*. In spite of their *confirmation by the royal authorities* certain articles of the rules are a slap in the face to the general principles of civil law on contracts. In all circumstances, however, separation of the workers' money from the capitalists' remains the essential precondition for any reform of the colliers' lodges.

The Saxon colliery owners' contribution to the lodge funds implies the grudging admission that capital is responsible, up to a point, for the accidents that imperil the wage worker's life and limb at the workplace during his labour. But instead of allowing this liability to become the pretext for extending capital's despotism, as the case is now, the workers must agitate *for the legal regulation of responsibility*.

Written between February  
17 and 21, 1869

Translated from the German

## Karl Marx

### Obituary

Citizen Robert Shaw, Correspondent of the London General Council for North America, and one of the founders of the International, died this week of pulmonary tuberculosis.

He was one of the most active members of the Council. A pure heart, iron character, passionate temperament, truly revolutionary intelligence, quite above any petty ambition or personal interest. A poor worker himself, he could always find a worker poorer than himself to help. As meek as a child in personal affairs, he indignantly rejected all manner of compromise in public life. It is principally due to his constant efforts that the *Trades Unions* have rallied around us. But this work itself made him plenty of implacable foes. The English *Trades Unions*, all of local origin, all primitively founded with the exclusive purpose of maintaining wages, etc., were completely more or less afflicted by the narrowness that characterised the medieval workshop. There was a little conservative party that wanted at all cost to preserve the basic framework of unionism. Since the International's inception, Shaw made it his life's aim to break these voluntary chains and transform the unions into organised centres of the proletarian revolution. Success almost always crowned his efforts, but ever since that moment his life became a terrible battle in which his feeble health had to give way. He was already dying when he left for the Brussels Congress (September 1868). After his return, his good bourgeois masters banned him from all their works. He leaves a wife and daughter in poverty, but the English workers will not leave them in the lurch.

Written about January 8,  
1870

*The General Council of the First International,  
1868-1870. Minutes, Progress Publishers,  
Moscow, 1974, pp. 408-09*

**Frederick Engels**

*Resolution of the General Council  
Expelling Tolain from the I. W. M. A.*<sup>34</sup>

The General Council of the International Working Men's Association,

Considering the resolution of the Federal Council of the Paris Sections expelling Citizen Tolain from the Association because, after having been elected to the National Assembly as a representative of the working classes, he has deserted their cause in the most disgraceful manner; which resolution the General Council is called upon to confirm,

Considering that the place of every French member of the I. W. M. A. is undoubtedly on the side of the Commune of Paris and not in the usurpatory and counter-revolutionary Assembly of Versailles,

Confirms the resolution of the Paris Federal Council and declares that Citizen Tolain is expelled from the I. W. M. A.

The General Council was prevented from taking action in this matter sooner, by the fact that the above resolution of the Paris Federal Council was laid before them, in an authentic shape, on the 25th April only.

Written by Engels in English,  
with corrections by Marx

*The General Council of the First International,  
1870-1871. Minutes, 1974, p. 355*

*From Notes of a Speech by Karl Marx  
on Trades Unions*<sup>35</sup>

- **From the Minutes of the London Conference  
of the International Working Men's Association,  
September 20, 1871**

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**I**

The trades unions, said Marx, are an aristocratic minority—the poor workers cannot belong to them: the bulk of the workers that economic development drives each day from the fields to the towns remain for a long time outside the trades unions and the most wretched mass never belongs to them; it is the same for the workers born in the East End of London—one in ten belongs to the trades unions. The peasants, the day labourers never belong to these societies.

The trades unions can do nothing by themselves—they remain a minority. They have no power over the mass of the proletarians—while the International directly influences these men—it has no need of their organisation to lead the workers—the international idea wins them over immediately—It is the only society inspiring full confidence in the workers.

Language, too, is an obstacle to an international union with the trades unions.

**II**

*Marx* does not share Steens's fear of trades unions<sup>36</sup>—they have never been able to do anything without appealing to us—even the best organised ones—those that have branches in the United States—remain outside the biggest revolutionary movement in England.<sup>37</sup>

Since the International has existed it has been different—if

they want to make use of their strength, with our aid, they can do everything—they had an article in their rules that forbade them meddling in politics—they have only been active politically under the influence of the International. For several years the General Council has been in touch with the trades unions—there was a committee<sup>38</sup>—in fact it still is in touch with three big towns—Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield.

Translated from the French

## Frederick Engels

### • *Apropos of Working-Class Political Action*

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#### **Reporter's Record of the Speech Made at the London Conference of the International Working Men's Association, September 21, 1871**

Complete abstention from political action is impossible. The abstentionist press participates in politics every day. It is only a question of how one does it, and of what politics one engages in. For the rest, to us abstention is impossible. The working-class party functions as a political party in most countries by now, and it is not for us to ruin it by preaching abstention. Living experience, the political oppression of the existing governments compels the workers to occupy themselves with politics whether they like it or not, be it for political or for social goals. To preach abstention to them is to throw them into the embrace of bourgeois politics. The morning after the Paris Commune, which has made proletarian political action an order of the day, abstention is entirely out of the question.

We want the abolition of classes. What is the means of achieving it? The only means is political domination of the proletariat. For all this, now that it is acknowledged by one and all, we are told not to meddle with politics. The abstentionists say they are revolutionaries, even revolutionaries *par excellence*. Yet revolution is a supreme political act and those who want revolution must also want the means of achieving it, that is, political action, which prepares the ground for revolution and provides the workers with the revolutionary training without which they are sure to become the dupes of the Favres and Pyats the morning after the battle. However,

our politics must be working-class politics. The workers' party must never be the tagtail of any bourgeois party; it must be independent and have its goal and its own policy.

The political freedoms, the right of assembly and association, and the freedom of the press—those are our weapons. Are we to sit back and abstain while somebody tries to rob us of them? It is said that a political act on our part implies that we accept the existing state of affairs. On the contrary, so long as this state of affairs offers us the means of pretesting against it, our use of these means does not signify that we recognise the prevailing order.

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 245-46

## Karl Marx

•From *Resolutions on the Split  
in the United States' Federation Passed  
by the General Council  
of The I.W.A. in its Sitzings  
of 5th and 12th March, 1872*<sup>39</sup>

### Sections

*Art. 1.* Considering, that Section No. 12 at New York has not only passed a formal resolution by virtue of which "each section" possesses "the independent right" to construe according to its fancy, "the proceedings of the several congresses" and the "General Rules and Regulations", but moreover has fully acted up to this doctrine which, if generally adopted, would leave nothing of the I.W.A. but its name;

that the same section has never ceased to make the I.W.A. the vehicle of issues some of which are foreign to, while others are directly opposed to, the aims and purposes of the I.W.A.;

For these reasons the General Council considers it its duty to put in force Administrative Resolution VI of the Bâle Congress<sup>40</sup> and to declare Section No. 12 *suspended* till the meeting of the next General Congress of the I.W.A. which is to take place in September 1872.

*Art. 2.* Considering, that the I.W.A., according to the General Rules, is to consist exclusively of "working men's societies" (see Art. 1, Art. 7 and Art. 11 of the General Rules);

that, consequently, Art. 9 of the General Rules to this effect: "Everybody who acknowledges and defends the principles of the I.W.A. is eligible to become a member", although it confers upon the active adherents of the *International*, who are no working men, the right either of individual membership or of admission to working men's sections, does in no way



legitimate the foundation of sections, exclusively or principally composed of members not belonging to the working class;...

...that the social conditions of the United States, though in many other respects most favourable to the success of the working-class movement, peculiarly facilitate the intrusion into the *International* of bogus reformers, middle-class quacks and trading politicians;

For these reasons the General Council recommends that in future there be admitted no new American section of which two-thirds at least do not consist of wages-labourers.

*Art. 3.* The General Council calls the attention of the American Federation to Resolution II, 3, of the London Conference relating to "sectarian sections" or "separatist bodies pretending to accomplish special missions" distinct from the common aim of the Association, viz., to emancipate the man of labour from his "economical subjection to the monopoliser of the means of labour", which "lies at the bottom of servitude in all its forms, of all social misery, mental degradation, and political dependence" (see Preamble of the General Rules).

Written about March 5,  
1872

*The General Council of the First International,  
1871-1872. Minutes, 1974, pp. 411-13*

## **Frederick Engels**

### *Relations Between the Irish Sections and the British Federal Council*

#### **Engels's Record of His Report at the General Council Meeting of May 14, 1872 <sup>41</sup>**

Citizen *Engels* said the real purport of this motion was to bring the Irish sections under the jurisdiction of the British Federal Council, a thing to which the Irish sections would never consent, and which the Council had neither the right nor the power to impose upon them. According to the Rules and Regulations, this Council had no power to compel any section or branch to acknowledge the supremacy of any Federal Council whatsoever. It was certainly bound, before admitting or rejecting any new branch, within the jurisdiction of any Federal Council, to consult that Council. But he maintained that the Irish sections in England were no more under the jurisdiction of the British Federal Council than the French, German or Italian sections in this country. The Irish formed, to all intents and purposes, a distinct nationality of their own, and the fact that they used the English language could not deprive them of the right, common to all, to have an independent national organisation within the International.

Citizen Hales had spoken of the relations between England and Ireland as if they were of the most idyllic nature, something like those between England and France at the time of the Crimean war,<sup>42</sup> when the ruling classes of the two countries never tired of praising each other, and everything breathed the most complete harmony. But the case was quite different. There was the fact of seven centuries of English conquest and oppression of Ireland, and so long as that oppression existed, it was an insult to Irish working men to ask them

to submit to a British Federal Council. The position of Ireland with regard to England was not that of an equal, it was that of Poland with regard to Russia. What would be said if this Council called upon Polish sections to acknowledge the supremacy of a Russian Federal Council in Petersburg, or upon Prussian Polish, North Schleswig, and Alsatian sections to submit to a Federal Council in Berlin? Yet what it was asked to do with regard to Irish sections was substantially the same thing. If members of a conquering nation called upon the nation they had conquered and continued to hold down to forget their specific nationality and position, to "sink national differences" and so forth, that was not Internationalism, it was nothing else but preaching to them submission to the yoke, and attempting to justify and to perpetuate the dominion of the conqueror under the cloak of Internationalism. It was sanctioning the belief, only too common among the English working men, that they were superior beings compared to the Irish, and as much an aristocracy as the mean Whites of the Slave States considered themselves to be with regard to the Negroes.

In a case like that of the Irish, true Internationalism must necessarily be based upon a distinctly national organisation; the Irish, as well as other oppressed nationalities, could enter the Association only as equals with the members of the conquering nation, and under protest against the conquest. The Irish sections, therefore, not only were justified, but even under the necessity to state in the preamble to their rules that their first and most pressing duty, as Irishmen, was to establish their own national independence. The antagonism between Irish and English working men in England had always been one of the most powerful means by which class rule was upheld in England. He recollected the time when he saw Feargus O'Connor and the English Chartists turned out of the Hall of Science in Manchester by the Irish.<sup>43</sup> Now, for the first time, there was a chance of making English and Irish working men act together in harmony for their common emancipation, a result attained by no previous movement in their country. And no sooner had this been effected, than they

were called upon to dictate to the Irish, and to tell them they must not carry on the movement in their own way, but submit to be ruled by an English Council! Why, that was introducing into the International the subjugation of the Irish by the English.

If the promoters of this motion were so brimful of the truly International spirits, let them prove it by removing the seat of the British Federal Council to Dublin, and submit to a Council of Irishmen.

As to the pretended collisions between Irish and English branches, they had been provoked by attempts of members of the British Federal Council to meddle with the Irish sections, to get them to give up their specific national character and to come under the rule of the British Council.

Then the Irish sections in England could not be separated from the Irish sections in Ireland; it would not do to have some Irishmen dependent upon a London Federal Council and others upon a Dublin Federal Council. The Irish sections in England were our base of operations with regard to the Irish working men in Ireland; they were more advanced, being placed in more favourable circumstances, and the movement in Ireland could be propagated and organised only through their instrumentality. And were they to wilfully destroy their own base of operations and cut off the only means by which Ireland could be effectually won for the International? For it must not be forgotten that the Irish sections, and rightly so, would never consent to give up their distinct national organisation and submit to the British Council. The question, then, amounted to this: were they to leave the Irish alone, or were they to turn them out of the Association? If the motion was adopted by the Council, the Council would inform the Irish working men, in so many words, that, after the dominion of the English aristocracy over Ireland, after the dominion of the English middle class over Ireland, they must now look forth to the advent of the dominion of the English working class over Ireland.

Written about May 14,  
1872

*The General Council of the First International,  
1871-1872. Minutes, pp. 297-300*

## Frederick Engels

### *The International in America*

Our readers will have seen from the American reports we published that a split has occurred among the members of the International in the United States. The events which have taken place in New York during the last few months, are indeed so novel in the history of the International that they deserve to be set forth in perspective. We are using an article published in the *Emancipacion*<sup>44</sup> of Madrid (June 22) as a basis and supplement it with material from original documents in our possession.

It is well known that the bourgeoisie and the governments of Europe have presented the International as a terrifying bugbear. This has served its purpose and horrified all respectable citizens so that there is no danger of the International being diverted from its original aims by a huge influx of middle-class people. But things are quite different in America. Issues that are likely to give the bourgeoisie and governments of Europe fits, are on the contrary regarded as interesting over there. A society that has developed on entirely bourgeois foundation without a landed aristocracy and without a monarchy can laugh at the childish terror of the European bourgeoisie that has not yet outgrown—mentally at any rate not even in France—the effects of the scourge of the monarchy and aristocracy. Hence the more frightening the International seemed in Europe, and the more it was depicted as something outrageous by the correspondents of the American press—and no one can paint a more garish picture than these gentlemen—the more the Americans thought that now the International was an object suitable for making capital, both financial and political capital, out of it.

How far American society is ahead of European society is strikingly demonstrated by the fact that two American *ladies*

were the first to discover this and to attempt to gain the advantage from it. While the gentlemen of the European bourgeoisie were trembling at the thought of the International, two American bourgeois women, Mrs. Victoria Woodhull and her sister Miss Tenni Claflin (publishers of *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly*<sup>45</sup>) decided to exploit this fearsome society. And they almost succeeded.

These two sisters, millionairesses and advocates of the emancipation of women and especially of "free love", resolutely joined the International. Section No. 9 was set up under the leadership of Miss Claflin and section No. 12 under the leadership of Mrs. Woodhull. New sections soon arose in various parts of America, all set up by supporters of the two sisters. According to the existing arrangements every section had the right to send one delegate to the Central Committee, meeting in New York. The result was that the Federal Council, which originally consisted of German, Irish and French workers, was very soon inundated by a multitude of American bourgeois adventurers of all sorts and both sexes. The workers were pushed into the background and the victory of the two calculating sisters seemed certain. Section No. 12 came now to the fore and explained to the founders of the American International what it was really all about.

Section No. 12 issued an appeal dated August 30, 1871, and signed by W. West, Secretary. In it we read:

"The object of the International is simply to emancipate the labourer, male and female, by the conquest of political power." "It involves, first, the Political Equality and Social Freedom of men and women alike." "*Political Equality* means the personal participation of each in the preparation, administration and execution of the laws by which all are governed. *Social Freedom* means absolute immunity from impertinent intrusion in all affairs of exclusively personal concernment, such as religious belief, the *sexual relation*, *habits of dress*, etc." "The proposition involves, secondly, the establishment of a *Universal Government*.... Of course, the abolition of ... *differences of languages* are embraced in the programme."

So that no misunderstanding should arise concerning the purpose of the organisation, it demands that

"If practicable, for the convenience of political action, there should be a section formed in every primary election district.... There must ultimately be

instituted in every town a Municipal Committee ... corresponding with the Common Councils; in every State, a State Committee ... corresponding with the State legislature, and in the Nation, a National Committee ... corresponding with the United States National Congress... The work of the International includes nothing less than the institution, within existing forms, of another form of Government, which shall supersede them all."

According to this it was the business of the International to exploit the existing state, and not to overturn the foundations of this state. In fact, as Mr. West quite correctly exclaimed (*Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly*, March 2, 1872):

"The issue of the Appeal of Section 12 ... was a *new departure* in the history of the International."

In order to accomplish this "new departure", it was first of all necessary to shake off the fetters imposed by the General Rules and Congress Resolutions, which hitherto had been undeniably valid. Consequently, Section No. 12 proclaimed

"the independent right of each section to have, hold and give expression to its own construction of said proceedings of the several Congresses, and the Rules and Regulations of said General Council" (that is to say of the General Rules and Administrative Regulations of the Association) "each section being alone responsible for its own action" (*Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly*, October 21, 1871).

The mischief went now too far. Instead of workers' sections, sections consisting of all sorts of bourgeois humbugs, advocates of free love, spirit-rappers, spirit-rapping Shakers,<sup>46</sup> etc., were formed. Therefore Section No. 1 (consisting of Germans), the first section of the International to be formed in America, at long last issued an appeal in which, in face of this swindle, the essentially proletarian nature of the Association was stressed. The American parent Section No. 12 replied immediately. Through West, its Secretary, it declared in *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly* that

"The extension of equal citizenship to women, the world over, must *precede any general change in the subsisting relations of capital and labour*.... Section No. 12 would also remonstrate against the vain assumption, running all through the Protest" (of Section No. 1), "that the International Working Men's Association is *an organisation of the working classes*."

Another protest of Section No. 12 followed on November 25, in which we read:

"The statement" (in the General Rules) "that the emancipation of the working classes can only be conquered by themselves, cannot be denied, yet it is true so far as it describes the fact that *the working classes cannot be emancipated against their will.*"

Open warfare broke out at last between the exploiters of the state apparatus, place hunters, advocates of free love, spirit-rappers and other middle-class humbugs on the one side and, on the other side, workers who in their naiveté really imagined that the International Working Men's Association was, in America as well, an organisation of the working class and not of the bourgeoisie. The German Section No. 1 demanded that the Central Committee should exclude Section No. 12 and expel the delegates of all sections in which workers made up less than two-thirds of the membership. Thereupon the Central Committee split, some of the Germans and the Irish together with a few Frenchmen supported Section No. 1, whereas the Americans, the majority of the French sections and two German sections (followers of Schweitzer) set up a new Central Committee.

The old Committee (which we call No. 1) issued a circular on December 4, in which it described the situation as follows:

"The Central Committee, which should have been a defence against all fraudulent reforms, finally comprised a majority of reformers and benefactors of the people who had almost completely sunk into oblivion. Thus it came about that the people who preached the gospel of free love rubbed shoulders amicably with those who wanted to confer the blessing of a common language on the whole world; there were also exponents of agricultural co-operative societies, spirit-rappers, atheists and deists each trying to ride his own hobbyhorse. Section No. 12 (Woodhull) in particular.... The first step which must be taken here to advance the movement is to improve the organisation and at the same time to stimulate the revolutionary element based on the opposition between the interests of the worker and those of the capitalist.... After the adjournment of the old Central Committee (on December 3, 1871) for an indefinite period, the delegates of Sections Nos. 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 16, 21, 23, 24, 25, etc, realising that all their efforts to check the mischief were in vain, decided to form a new Central Committee *which was to consist of real workers.*" 47



Meanwhile Central Committee No. 2 (Woodhull) likewise continued to meet and was replenished with a lot of delegates from allegedly new sections, set up in the main by Sections Nos. 9 and 12. But most of the sections were so small that they had hardly enough members to fill even the most essential offices (secretary, treasurer, etc.).

Both Committees appealed to the General Council in London. In the meantime various sections (e.g. the French Section No. 10 and all the Irish sections) had withdrawn from the two Committees to await the decision of the General Council.

The General Council passed several resolutions<sup>a</sup> on March 5 and 12, which have already been published in the *Volkstaat*<sup>48</sup> (No. 37). They suspend Section No. 12 and advise the two Committees to unite until an American Congress meets and decides the matter, and recommend that henceforth no section should be admitted unless at least two-thirds of its members are wage-earners. Although, for very good reasons, these resolutions are almost exclusively couched in the form of recommendations, they have decided the fate of the International in America. By in fact concurring with Committee No. 1, the resolutions have precluded the farther exploitation of the name of the International by the bourgeois members in Committee No. 2 for their particular purposes.

In direct contravention of Resolution XVII of the London Conference, which stated that all internal questions of the Association were not to be discussed publicly but only within the sections or federations, Committee No. 2 had since the beginning of the split invited reporters of the New York press to all its debates and seen to it that the whole affair was commented on in the most notorious bourgeois newspapers. The same was the case now, when this Committee attacked the General Council, which it had believed to have captivated. Committee No. 2 enabled the most disreputable papers of New York, such as the *Herald*,<sup>49</sup> to declare that the whole affair was a quarrel between Germans and Frenchmen, between Communism and

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<sup>a</sup> See present edition, pp. 63-64 - *Ed.*

Socialism, etc., and the enemies of the workers in New York were elated by the alleged annihilation of the International in America.

Committee No. 2, moreover, continued to inform the world that the International was not a workers' organisation but a bourgeois organisation. As early as December 16, 1871, its paper, the *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly* wrote—

"No new test of membership, as that two-thirds or any part of a section shall be *wages-slaves as if it were a crime to be free*, was required" in our Committee.

And, on May 4, 1872, it again declared—

"In this decree of the General Council its authors presume to recommend that in future no American section be admitted, of which two-thirds at least are not *wages-slaves*. Must they be *politically slaves* also? As well one thing as the other.... The intrusion ... of 'bogus reformers', do-gooders, 'middle-class quacks and trading politicians' is mostly to be feared from that class of citizens who have nothing better to depend upon than the *proceeds of wages-slavery*."

In one respect this was the final verdict of Committee No. 2. Not only was it an absurdity to think that the International Working Men's Association was an organisation of workers, but in addition the Association could only achieve its goal if it expelled all workers, all wages-slaves, or at least declared them suspect.

And what is the goal of the International Working Men's Association (without Working Men) in America? We are now told this as well. The elections of a new president were approaching in the United States.

The inevitable ladies' paper, the *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly*, printed an article on March 2, 1872, under the heading "The Coming Combination Convention". In it we read:

"There is a proposition under consideration by the representatives of the various reformatory elements of the country looking to a grand consolidated convention to be held in this city in May next.... Indeed, if this convention in May acts wisely, who can say that the fragments of the defunct Democratic" (i. e. pro-slavery) "Party will not come out ... and take part in the proposed convention." All *radicals* should "be represented in it", etc.

A week later this paper printed appeals to all do-gooders,

"Labor, Land, Peace and Temperance reformers, and Internationals and Women Suffragists" and "all those who believe that the time has come to carry out the principles of true morality and religion" (!).

These were signed in the first place by Victoria Woodhull, and then by Th. H. Banks, R. W. Hume, G. R. Allen, W. West, G. W. Maddox, T. Millot, in short by the chiefs of Committee No. 2. All these appeals expressly stated that the convention of delegates would nominate candidates for the presidency and vice-presidency of the United States.

This monster convention was finally held in the Apollo Hall of New York on May 9, 10 and 11. All male and female cranks of America were assembled there. Committee No. 2 was present *en masse*. It was decided to nominate *Mrs. Victoria Woodhull as presidential candidate of the United States*, and moreover *in the name of the International!*

The response to this was peals of laughter throughout America. This of course did not deter the American speculators interested in the matter. It was different with the Germans and French who had allowed themselves to become involved. Section No. 2 (French) has dismissed its delegate to Committee No. 2 and accepted the decisions of the General Council. Section No. 6 (German) has likewise dismissed its delegate to Committee No. 2—a Dr. Grosse who was formerly the private secretary of Schweitzer in Berlin—and withdrawn from Committee No. 2 until it accepted the decisions of the General Council. Eight other sections (French and German) have withdrawn from Committee No. 2 on May 20, and it now consists only of the well-known equivocal Americans—Mrs. Victoria Woodhull and her entourage—who were in fact already close associates before they joined the International. These people have declared now that they intend to set up a separate, exclusively American International, and this they are of course at liberty to do.

Meanwhile in reply to an inquiry made by the German Section of Saint Louis and the French Section of New Orleans, the General Council has stated that it recognises

only Committee No. 1 (now the provisional Federal Council of the United States). And that has spelt the end of Mrs. Victoria Woodhull's campaign to conquer the International.

- The *Emancipation* adds:

"In view of these facts, all unbiased people must wonder when and how this scandal would have ended, had there been no General Council empowered to uphold the basic principles of the International and to suspend those Sections and Federations which tried to transform the Association into an instrument for attaining their political and personal designs."

Written about July 9, 1872

Marx and Engels, *On the United States*,  
Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979,  
pp. 238-43

## **Karl Marx and Frederick Engels**

### *From The Resolutions of the General Congress Held in The Hague*

**September 2-7, 1872**<sup>50</sup>

#### **I**

#### **Resolution on the Rules**

*Article 7a.* In its struggle against the collective power of the possessing classes the proletariat can act as a class only by constituting itself a distinct political party, opposed to all the old parties formed by the possessing classes.

This constitution of the proletariat into a political party is indispensable to ensure the triumph of the social revolution and of its ultimate goal: the abolition of classes.

The coalition of the forces of the working class, already achieved by the economic struggle, must also serve, in the hands of this class, as a lever in its struggle against the political power of its exploiters.

As the lords of the land and of capital always make use of their political privileges to defend and perpetuate their economic monopolies and to enslave labour, the conquest of political power becomes the great duty of the proletariat.

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 291

## Frederick Engels

From *The Manchester Foreign Section—to All Sections and Members of the British Federation*<sup>51</sup>

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Fellow Working Men,

We feel compelled to address you in reply to a circular issued by those who called themselves the majority of the British Federal Council, and appealing to you to join them in open rebellion against the fundamental compact of our association<sup>52</sup>....

...The circular complains of the Congress resolution as to the political action of the working class. They say it was taken after the majority of the delegates had left. The official report published in No. 37 of the *International Herald*<sup>53</sup> (December 14th), shows that 48 delegates out of 64 voted on the question, out of which 35 voted in favour of the resolution. Among these 35 we find the name of Mr. Mottershead, who now signs a circular repudiating it....

...The circular totally falsifies the purport of this resolution, as will be easily seen by referring to its text as published in No. 37 of the *International Herald*.<sup>2</sup> The resolution does not, as is pretended, make political action obligatory upon Trades' Unions and other politically neutral bodies. It merely demands the formation, in every country, of a distinct working class party, opposed to middle class parties. That is to say, it calls here in England upon the working class to refuse any

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<sup>2</sup> See present edition, p. 76.—*Ed.*

longer to serve as the fag-end of the "great Liberal party", and to form an independent party of their own, as they did in the glorious times of the great Chartist movement.

Thus the alleged breach of faith towards the Trades' Unions turns out to be a pure invention. But, we may be allowed to ask *where are* the Trades' Unions *now* that at one time had affiliated themselves to the International? The cash accounts of last year show that they had almost every one disappeared during Citizen Hales' secretaryship. \*

Compiled on December 20, 1872

Printed according to the original

## Frederick Engels

### • From *The Housing Question*

#### Part one

#### How Proudhon Solves the Housing Question

In No. 10 and the following issues of the *Volksstaat* may be found a series of six articles on the housing question. These articles are worthy of attention only because, apart from some long-forgotten would-be literary writings of the forties, they are the first attempt to transplant the Proudhonist school to Germany. This represents such an enormous step backward in comparison with the whole course of development of German socialism, which delivered a decisive blow precisely to the Proudhonist ideas as far back as twenty-five years ago,<sup>a</sup> that it is worth while answering this attempt immediately.

The so-called housing shortage, which plays such a great role in the press nowadays, does not consist in the fact that the working class generally lives in bad, overcrowded and unhealthy dwellings. This shortage is not something peculiar to the present; it is not even one of the sufferings peculiar to the modern proletariat in contradistinction to all earlier oppressed classes. On the contrary, all oppressed classes in all periods suffered rather uniformly from it. In order to put an end to this housing shortage there is only *one* means: to abolish altogether the exploitation and oppression of the working class by the ruling class. What is meant today by housing shortage is the peculiar intensification of the bad housing conditions of the workers as a result of the sudden rush of population to the big cities; a colossal increase in rents, still greater congestion

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• <sup>a</sup> In Marx: *Misère de la philosophie*. Bruxelles et Paris, 1847 [The Poverty of Philosophy]. [Note by Engels.] (K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 105-212.—Ed.)



in the separate houses, and, for some, the impossibility of finding a place to live in at all. And *this* housing shortage gets talked of so much only because it is not confined to the working class but has affected the petty bourgeoisie as well.

The housing shortage from which the workers and part of the petty bourgeoisie suffer in our modern big cities is one of the innumerable *smaller*, secondary evils which result from the present-day capitalist mode of production. It is not at all a direct result of the exploitation of the worker *as* worker by the capitalist. This exploitation is the basic evil which the social revolution wants to abolish by abolishing the capitalist mode of production. The cornerstone of the capitalist mode of production is, however, the fact that our present social order enables the capitalist to buy the labour power of the worker at its value, but to extract from it much more than its value by making the worker work longer than is necessary to reproduce the price paid for the labour power. The surplus value produced in this fashion is divided among the whole class of capitalists and landowners, together with their paid servants, from the Pope and the Kaiser down to the night watchman and below. We are not concerned here with how this distribution comes about, but this much is certain: that all those who do not work can live only on the pickings from this surplus value, which reach them in one way or another. (Compare Marx's *Capital*, where this was propounded for the first time.)

The distribution of this surplus value, produced by the working class and taken from it without payment, among the non-working classes proceeds amid extremely edifying squabbles and mutual swindling. In so far as this distribution takes place by means of buying and selling, one of its chief methods is the cheating of the buyer by the seller; and in retail trade, particularly in the big cities, this has become an absolute condition of existence for the seller. When, however, the worker is cheated by his grocer or his baker, either in regard to the price or the quality of the merchandise, this does not happen to him in his specific capacity as a worker. On the contrary, as soon as a certain average measure of

cheating has become the social rule in any place, it must in the long run be adjusted by a corresponding increase in wages. The worker appears before the shopkeeper as a buyer, that is, as the owner of money or credit, and hence not at all in his capacity as a worker, that is, as a seller of labour power. The cheating may hit him, and the poorer class as a whole, harder than it hits the richer social classes, but it is not an evil which hits him exclusively, which is peculiar to his class. •

And it is just the same with the housing shortage. The expansion of the big modern cities gives the land in certain sections of them, particularly in those which are centrally situated, an artificial and often enormously increasing value; the buildings erected in these areas depress this value, instead of increasing it, because they no longer correspond to the changed circumstances. They are pulled down and replaced by others. This takes place above all with centrally located workers' houses, whose rents, even with the greatest overcrowding, can never, or only very slowly, increase above a certain maximum. They are pulled down and in their stead shops, warehouses and public buildings are erected. Through its Haussmann in Paris, Bonapartism exploited this tendency tremendously for swindling and private enrichment. But the spirit of Haussmann has also been abroad in London, Manchester and Liverpool, and seems to feel itself just as much at home in Berlin and Vienna. The result is that the workers are forced out of the centre of the towns towards the outskirts; that workers' dwellings, and small dwellings in general, become rare and expensive and often altogether unobtainable, for under these circumstances the building industry, which is offered a much better field for speculation by more expensive dwelling houses, builds workers' dwellings only by way of exception.

This housing shortage, therefore, certainly hits the worker harder than it hits any more prosperous class, but it is just as little an evil which burdens the working class exclusively as is the cheating of the shopkeeper, and, as far as the working class is concerned, when this evil reaches a certain level and

attains a certain permanency, it must similarly find a certain economic adjustment.

It is largely with just such sufferings as these, which the working class endures in common with other classes, and particularly the petty bourgeoisie, that petty-bourgeois socialism, to which Proudhon belongs, prefers to occupy itself. And thus it is not at all accidental that our German Proudhonist<sup>a</sup> seizes chiefly upon the housing question, which, as we have seen, is by no means exclusively a working-class question; and that he declares it to be, on the contrary, a true, exclusively working-class question.

*"The tenant is in the same position in relation to the house-owner as the wage-worker in relation to the capitalist."*

This is totally untrue.

In the housing question we have two parties confronting each other: the tenant and the landlord, or house-owner. The former wishes to purchase from the latter the temporary use of a dwelling; he has money or credit, even if he has to buy this credit from the house-owner himself at a usurious price in the shape of an addition to the rent. It is a simple commodity sale; it is not a transaction between proletarian and bourgeois, between worker and capitalist. The tenant—even if he is a worker—appears as *a man with money*; he must already have sold his commodity, a commodity peculiarly his own, his labour power, to be able to appear with the proceeds as the buyer of the use of a dwelling or he must be in a position to give a guarantee of the impending sale of this labour power. The peculiar results which attend the sale of labour power to the capitalist are completely absent here. The capitalist causes the purchased labour power first to produce its own value but secondly to produce a surplus value, which remains in his hands for the time being, subject to distribution among the capitalist class. In this case, therefore, an excess value is produced, the sum total of the existing value is increased. In a renting transaction the situation is quite different. No matter

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<sup>a</sup> Mülberger.—Ed.

how much the landlord may overreach the tenant it is still only a transfer of already *existing*, previously *produced* value, and the total sum of values possessed by the landlord and the tenant *together* remains the same after as it was before. The worker is always cheated of a part of the product of his labour, whether that labour is paid for by the capitalist below, above or at its value; the tenant only when he is compelled to pay for the dwelling above its value. It is therefore a complete misrepresentation of the 'relation between landlord and tenant to attempt to make it equivalent to the relation between worker and capitalist. On the contrary, we are dealing here with a quite ordinary commodity transaction between two citizens, and this transaction proceeds according to the economic laws which govern the sale of commodities in general, and in particular the sale of the commodity "landed property". The building and maintenance costs of the house or of the part of the house in question enter first into the calculation; the value of the land, determined by the more or less favourable situation of the house, comes next; the relation between supply and demand existing at the moment decides in the end. This simple economic relation expresses itself in the mind of our Proudhonist as follows:

"The house, once it has been built, serves as a *perpetual legal title* to a definite fraction of social labour although the real value of the house has been paid to the owner long ago more than adequately in the form of rent. Thus it comes about that a house which, for instance, was built fifty years ago, during this period covers the original cost price two, three, five, ten and more times over in its rent yield."

Here we have at once Proudhon in his entirety. First, it is forgotten that the rent must not only pay the interest on the building costs, but must also cover repairs and the average amount of bad debts and unpaid rents as well as the occasional periods when the house is untenanted, and finally must pay off in annual instalments the building capital which has been invested in a house, which is perishable and which in time becomes uninhabitable and worthless. Secondly, it is forgotten that the rent must also pay interest on the increased

value of the land upon which the building is erected and that, therefore, a part of it consists of ground rent. Our Proudhonist immediately declares, it is true, that since this increment is brought about without the landowner having contributed anything, it does not equitably belong to him but to society as a whole. However, he overlooks the fact that he is thereby in reality demanding the abolition of landed property, a point which would lead us too far if we went into it here. And finally he overlooks the fact that the whole transaction is not at all one of buying the house from its owner, but of buying only its use for a certain time. Proudhon, who never bothered himself about the real, the actual conditions under which any economic phenomenon occurs, is naturally also unable to explain how the original cost price of a house is under certain circumstances paid back ten times over in the course of fifty years in the form of rent. Instead of examining this not at all difficult question economically and establishing whether it is really in contradiction to economic laws, and if so how, Proudhon resorts to a bold leap from economics into jurisprudence: "The house, once it has been built, serves as a *perpetual legal title*" to a certain annual payment. How this comes about, *how* the house *becomes* a legal title, on this Proudhon is silent. And yet that is just what he should have explained. Had he examined this question he would have found that not all the legal titles in the world, no matter how perpetual, could give a house the power of obtaining its cost price back ten times, over the course of fifty years, in the form of rent, but that only economic conditions (which may have obtained social recognition in the form of legal titles) can accomplish this. And with this he would again be where he started from.

The whole Proudhonist teaching rests on this saving leap from economic reality into legal phraseology. Every time our good Proudhon loses the economic hang of things—and this happens to him with every serious problem—he takes refuge in the sphere of law and appeals to *eternal justice*.

"Proudhon begins by taking his ideal of justice, of '*justice éternelle*', from the juridical relations that correspond to the production of commodities; thereby, it may be noted, he

proves, to the consolation of all good citizens, that the production of commodities is a form of production as everlasting as justice. Then he turns round and seeks to reform the actual production of commodities, and the actual legal system corresponding thereto, in accordance with this ideal. What opinion should we have of a chemist, who, instead of studying the actual laws of the molecular changes in the composition and decomposition of matter, and on that foundation solving definite problems, claimed to regulate the composition and decomposition of matter by means of the 'eternal ideas', of '*naturalité and affinité*'? Do we really know any more about 'usury', when we say it contradicts '*justice éternelle*', '*équité éternelle*', '*mutualité éternelle*', and other '*vérités éternelles*', than the fathers of the church did when they said it was incompatible with '*grâce éternelle*', '*foi éternelle*', and '*la volonté éternelle de Dieu*'? (Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 45.<sup>a</sup>)

Our Proudhonist does not fare any better than his lord and master:

"The rent agreement is one of the thousand exchanges which are as necessary in the life of modern society as the circulation of the blood in the bodies of animals. Naturally, it would be in the interest of this society if all these exchanges were pervaded by a *conception of right*, that is to say, if they were carried out everywhere according to the strict demands of justice. In a word, the economic life of society must, as Proudhon says, raise itself to the heights of *economic right*. In reality, as we know, exactly the opposite takes place."

Is it credible that five years after Marx had characterised Proudhonism so summarily and convincingly precisely from this decisive angle, one can still print such confused stuff in the German language? What does this rigmarole mean? Nothing more than that the practical effects of the economic laws which govern present-day society run contrary to the author's sense of justice and that he cherishes the pious wish that the matter might be so arranged as to remedy this situation. Yes, if toads had tails they would no longer be toads! And is then the capitalist mode of production not "pervaded

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<sup>a</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, pp. 88-89.—*Ed.*

by a conception of right", namely, that of its own right to exploit the workers? And if the author tells us that is not *his* conception of right, are we one step further?

But let us go back to the housing question. Our Proud-<sup>h</sup>onist now gives his "conception of right" free rein and treats us to the following moving declamation:

"We do not hesitate to assert that there is no more terrible mockery of the whole culture of our lauded century than the fact that in the big cities 90 per cent and more of the population have no place that they can call their own. The real nodal point of moral and family existence, hearth and home, is being swept away by the social whirlpool.... In this respect we are far below the savages. The troglodyte has his cave, the Australian his clay hut, the Indian his own hearth, but the modern proletarian is practically suspended in mid-air," etc.

In this jeremiad we have Proudhonism in its whole reactionary form. In order to create the modern revolutionary class of the proletariat it was absolutely necessary to cut the umbilical cord which still bound the worker of the past to the land. The hand weaver who had his little house, garden and field along with his loom was a quiet, contented man, "godly and honourable" despite all misery and despite all political pressure; he doffed his cap to the rich, to the priest and to the officials of the state and inwardly was altogether a slave. It is precisely modern large-scale industry which has turned the worker, formerly chained to the land, into a completely propertyless proletarian, liberated from all traditional fetters, *a free outlaw*; it is precisely this economic revolution which has created the sole conditions under which the exploitation of the working class in its final form, in capitalist production, can be overthrown. And now comes this tearful Proudhonist and bewails the driving of the workers from hearth and home as though it were a great retrogression instead of being the very first condition of their intellectual emancipation.

Twenty-seven years ago I described, in *The Condition of the Working Class in England*,<sup>a</sup> the main features of just this process of driving the workers from hearth and home, as it took place in the eighteenth century in England. The infamies of which

<sup>a</sup> K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, 1974, pp. 295-583.—Ed.

the land and factory owners were guilty in so doing, and the deleterious effects, material and moral, which this expulsion inevitably had on the workers concerned in the first place, are there also described as they deserve. But could it enter my head to regard this, which was in the circumstances an absolutely necessary historical process of development, as a retrogression "below the savages"? Impossible! The English proletarian of 1872 is on an infinitely higher level than the rural weaver of 1772 with his "hearth and home". And will the troglodyte with his cave, the Australian with his clay hut or the Indian with his own hearth ever accomplish a June insurrection<sup>54</sup> or a Paris Commune?

That the situation of the workers has on the whole become materially worse since the introduction of capitalist production on a large scale is doubted only by the bourgeois. But should we therefore look backward longingly to the (likewise very meagre) fleshpots of Egypt,<sup>55</sup> to rural small-scale industry, which produced only servile souls, or to "the savages"? On the contrary. Only the proletariat created by modern large-scale industry, liberated from all inherited fetters including those which chained it to the land, and herded together in the big cities, is in a position to accomplish the great social transformation which will put an end to all class exploitation and all class rule. The old rural hand weavers with hearth and home would never have been able to do it; they would never have been able to conceive such an idea, not to speak of desiring to carry it out.

For Proudhon, on the other hand, the whole industrial revolution of the last hundred years, the introduction of steam power and large-scale factory production which substitutes machinery for hand labour and increases the productivity of labour a thousandfold, is a highly repugnant occurrence, something which really ought never to have taken place. The petty-bourgeois Proudhon aspires to a world in which each person turns out a separate and independent product that is immediately consumable and exchangeable in the market. Then, as long as each person receives back the full value of his labour in the form of another product, "eternal justice" is



satisfied and the best possible world created. But this best possible world of Proudhon has already been nipped in the bud and trodden underfoot by the advance of industrial development, which long ago destroyed individual labour in all the big branches of industry and which is destroying it daily more and more in the smaller and even smallest branches, which is setting social labour supported by machinery and the harnessed forces of nature in its place, and whose finished product, immediately exchangeable or consumable, is the joint work of the many individuals through whose hands it has had to pass. And it is precisely this industrial revolution which has raised the productive power of human labour to such a high level that—for the first time in the history of mankind—the possibility exists, given a rational division of labour among all, of producing not only enough for the plentiful consumption of all members of society and for an abundant reserve fund, but also of leaving each individual sufficient leisure so that what is really worth preserving in historically inherited culture—science, art, forms of intercourse—may not only be preserved but converted from a monopoly of the ruling class into the common property of the whole of society, and may be further developed. And here is the decisive point: as soon as the productive power of human labour has risen to this height, every excuse disappears for the existence of a ruling class. After all, the ultimate basis on which class differences were defended was always: there must be a class which need not plague itself with the production of its daily subsistence, in order that it may have time to look after the intellectual work of society. This talk, which up to now had its great historical justification, has been cut off at the root once and for all by the industrial revolution of the last hundred years. The existence of a ruling class is becoming daily more and more a hindrance to the development of industrial productive power, and equally so to that of science, art and especially of forms of cultural intercourse. There never were greater boors than our modern bourgeois.

All this is nothing to friend Proudhon. He wants “eternal justice” and nothing else. Each shall receive in exchange for

his product the full proceeds of his labour, the full value of his labour. But to calculate this in a product of modern industry is a complicated matter. For modern industry obscures the particular share of the individual in the total product, which in the old individual handicraft was obviously represented by the finished product. Further, modern industry eliminates more and more individual exchange, on which Proudhon's whole system is built up, namely, direct exchange between two producers each of whom takes the product of the other in order to consume it. Consequently a reactionary streak runs through the whole of Proudhonism; an aversion to the industrial revolution and the desire, sometimes overtly, sometimes covertly expressed, to drive the whole of modern industry out of the temple—steam engines, mechanical looms and the rest of the business—and to return to old, respectable hand labour. That we would then lose nine hundred and ninety-nine thousandths of our productive power, that the whole of humanity would be condemned to the worst possible labour slavery, that starvation would become the general rule—what does all that matter if only we succeed in organising exchange in such a fashion that each receives “the full proceeds of his labour”, and that “eternal justice” is realised?

*Fiat justitia, pereat mundus!*

Let justice be done though the whole world perish!

And the world would perish in this Proudhonist counter-revolution if it were at all possible to carry it out.

It is, however, self-evident that, even with social production conditioned by modern large-scale industry, it is possible to assure each person “the full proceeds of his labour”, so far as this phrase has any meaning at all. And it has a meaning only if it is extended to purport not that each individual worker becomes the possessor of “the full proceeds of his labour”, but that the whole of society, consisting entirely of workers, becomes the possessor of the total product of their labour, which product it partly distributes among its members for consumption, partly uses for replacing and increasing its means of production, and partly stores up as a reserve fund for production and consumption....

## Part two

### How the Bourgeoisie Solves the Housing Question

#### I

In the section on the *Proudhonist* solution of the housing question it was shown how greatly the petty bourgeoisie is directly interested in this question. However, the big bourgeoisie is also very much interested in it, even if indirectly. Modern natural science has proved that the so-called "poor districts", in which the workers are crowded together, are the breeding places of all those epidemics which from time to time afflict our towns. Cholera, typhus, typhoid fever, small-pox and other ravaging diseases spread their germs in the pestilential air and the poisoned water of these working-class quarters. Here the germs hardly ever die out completely, and as soon as circumstances permit they develop into epidemics and then spread beyond their breeding places into the more airy and healthy parts of the town inhabited by the capitalists. Capitalist rule cannot allow itself the pleasure of generating epidemic diseases among the working class with impunity; the consequences fall back on it and the angel of death rages in its ranks as ruthlessly as in the ranks of the workers.

As soon as this fact had been scientifically established the philanthropic bourgeois became inflamed with a noble spirit of competition in their solicitude for the health of their workers. Societies were founded, books were written, proposals drawn up, laws debated and passed, in order to stop up the sources of the ever-recurring epidemics. The housing conditions of the workers were investigated and attempts made to remedy the most crying evils. In England particularly, where the largest number of big towns existed and where the bourgeoisie itself was, therefore, running the greatest risk, extensive activity began. Government commissions were appointed to inquire into the hygienic conditions of the working classes. Their reports, honourably distinguished from all continental sources by their accuracy, completeness and impartiality, provided the basis for new, more or less thoroughgoing laws. Im-

perfect as these laws are, they are still infinitely superior to everything that has been done in this direction up to the present on the Continent. Nevertheless, the capitalist order of society reproduces again and again the evils to be remedied, and does so with such inevitable necessity that even in England the remedying of them has hardly advanced a single step.

Germany, as usual, needed a much longer time before the chronic sources of infection existing there also reached the acute stage necessary to arouse the somnolent big bourgeoisie. But he who goes slowly goes surely, and so among us too there finally has arisen a bourgeois literature on public health and the housing question, a watery extract of its foreign, and in particular its English, predecessors, to which it is sought fraudulently to impart a semblance of higher conception by means of fine-sounding and unctuous phrases. *The Housing Conditions of the Working Classes and Their Reform*, by Dr. Emil Sax, Vienna, 1869<sup>56</sup> belongs to this literature.

I have selected this book for a presentation of the bourgeois treatment of the housing question only because it makes the attempt to summarise as far as possible the bourgeois literature on the subject. And a fine literature it is which serves our author as his "sources"! Of the English parliamentary reports, the real main sources, only three, the very oldest, are mentioned by name; the whole book proves that its author has *never glanced at even a single one of them*. On the other hand, a whole series of banal bourgeois, well-meaning philistine and hypocritical philanthropic writings are enumerated: Ducpétiaux, Roberts, Hole, Huber, the proceedings of the English congresses on social science (or rather social bosh), the journal of the Association for the Welfare of the Labouring Classes in Prussia, the official Austrian report on the World Exhibition in Paris, the official Bonapartist reports on the same subject, the *Illustrated London News*, *Über Land und Meer*, and finally "a recognised authority", a man of "acute practical perception", of "convincing impressiveness of speech", namely - *Julius Faucher*! All that is missing in this list of sources is the *Gartenlaube*, *Kladderadatsch* and the Fusilier Kutschke.<sup>57</sup>

In order that no misunderstanding may arise concerning the standpoint of Herr Sax, he declares on page 22:

"By social economy we mean the doctrine of national economy in its application to social questions; or to put it more precisely, the totality of the ways and means which this science offers us *for raising the so-called (!) propertyless classes to the level of the propertied classes, on the basis of its 'iron' laws within the framework of the order of society at present prevailing.*"

We shall not go into the confused idea that generally speaking "the doctrine of national economy", or political economy, deals with other than "social" questions. We shall get down to the main point immediately. Dr. Sax demands that the "iron laws" of bourgeois economics, the "framework of the order of society at present prevailing", in other words, that the capitalist mode of production, must continue to exist unchanged, but nevertheless the "so-called propertyless classes" are to be raised "to the level of the propertied classes". Now, it is an unavoidable preliminary condition of the capitalist mode of production that a really, and not a so-called, propertyless class, should exist, a class which has nothing to sell but its labour power and which is therefore compelled to sell its labour power to the industrial capitalists. The task of the new science of social economy invented by Herr Sax is, therefore, to find ways and means—in a state of society founded on the antagonism of capitalists, owners of all raw materials, instruments of production and means of subsistence, on the one hand, and of propertyless wage-workers, who call only their labour power and nothing else their own, on the other hand—by which, inside this social order, all wage-workers can be turned into capitalists without ceasing to be wage-workers. Herr Sax thinks he has solved this question. Perhaps he would be so good as to show us how all the soldiers of the French army, each of whom carries a marshal's baton in his knapsack since the days of the old Napoleon, can be turned into field marshals without at the same time ceasing to be privates. Or how it could be brought about that all the forty million subjects of the German Reich could be made German kaisers.

It is the essence of bourgeois socialism to want to maintain

the basis of all the evils of present-day society and at the same time to want to abolish the evils themselves. As already pointed out in the *Communist Manifesto*, the bourgeois Socialists are desirous of "redressing social grievances, in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society"; they want "*a bourgeoisie without a proletariat*".\* We have seen that Herr Sax formulates the problem in exactly the same fashion. Its solution he finds in the solution of the housing problem. He is of the opinion that

"by improving the housing of the labouring classes it would be possible successfully to remedy the material and spiritual misery which has been described, and thereby—by a radical improvement of the housing conditions *alone*—to raise the greater part of these classes out of the morass of their often hardly human conditions of existence to the pure heights of material and spiritual well-being". (Page 14.)

Incidentally, it is in the interest of the bourgeoisie to gloss over the fact of the existence of a proletariat created by the bourgeois relations of production and determining the continued existence of these relations. Therefore Herr Sax tells us (page 21) that the expression labouring classes is to be understood as including all "impecunious social classes", "and, in general, people in a small way, such as handicraftsmen, widows, pensioners (!), subordinate officials, etc." as well as actual workers. Bourgeois socialism extends its hand to the petty-bourgeois variety.

Whence the housing shortage then? How did it arise? As a good bourgeois, Herr Sax is not supposed to know that it is a necessary product of the bourgeois social order; that it cannot fail to be present in a society in which the great labouring masses are exclusively dependent upon wages, that is to say, upon the quantity of means of subsistence necessary for their existence and for the propagation of their kind; in which improvements of the machinery, etc., continually throw masses of workers out of employment; in which violent and regularly recurring industrial fluctuations determine on the one hand

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\* See present edition, p. 30.—Ed.

the existence of a large reserve army of unemployed workers, and on the other hand drive the mass of the workers from time to time on to the streets unemployed; in which the workers are crowded together in masses in the big towns, at a quicker rate than dwellings come into existence for them under the prevailing conditions; in which, therefore, there must always be tenants even for the most infamous pigsties; and in which finally the house-owner in his capacity as capitalist has not only the right but, by reason of competition, to a certain extent also the duty of ruthlessly making as much out of his property in house rent as he possibly can. In such a society the housing shortage is no accident; it is a necessary institution and can be abolished together with all its effects on health, etc., only if the whole social order from which it springs is fundamentally refashioned. That, however, bourgeois socialism dare not know. It *dare* not explain the housing shortage as arising from the existing conditions. And therefore it has no other way but to explain the housing shortage by moralising that it is the result of the wickedness of man, the result of original sin, so to speak.

"And here we cannot fail to recognise—and in consequence we cannot deny" (daring conclusion!)—"that the blame ... rests partly *with the workers themselves*, those who want dwellings, and partly, the much greater part, it is true, with those who undertake to supply the need or those who, although they have sufficient means at their command, make no attempt to supply the need, namely, *the propertied, higher social classes*. The latter are to be blamed ... because they do not make it their business to provide for a sufficient supply of good dwellings."

Just as Proudhon takes us from the sphere of economics into the sphere of legal phrases, so our bourgeois Socialist takes us here from the economic sphere into the moral sphere. And nothing is more natural. Whoever declares that the capitalist mode of production, the "iron laws" of present-day bourgeois society, are inviolable, and yet at the same time would like to abolish their unpleasant but necessary consequences, has no other recourse but to deliver moral sermons to the capitalists; moral sermons whose emotional effects immediately evaporate under the influence of private interest and, if necessary, of

competition. These moral sermons are in effect exactly the same as those of the hen at the edge of the pond in which she sees the brood of ducklings she has hatched out gaily swimming. Ducklings take to the water although it has no beams, and capitalists pounce on profit although it is heartless. "There is no room for sentiment in money matters", was already said by old Hanseemann,<sup>38</sup> who knew more about it than Herr Sax.

"Good dwellings are so expensive that *it is absolutely impossible* for the greater part of the workers to make use of them. Big capital ... is shy of investing in houses for the working classes ... and as a result these classes and their housing needs fall mostly a prey to the speculators."

Disgusting speculation—big capital naturally never speculates! But it is not ill will, it is only ignorance which prevents big capital from speculating in workers' houses:

"House-owners do not *know* at all what a great and important role ... is played by a normal satisfaction of housing needs; *they do not know what they are doing to the people* when they offer them, as a general rule so irresponsibly, bad and harmful dwellings, and, finally, they do not *know* how they damage themselves thereby." (Page 27.)

However, the ignorance of the capitalists must be supplemented by the ignorance of the workers before a housing shortage can be created. After Herr Sax has admitted that "the very lowest sections" of the workers "are obliged (!) to seek a night's lodging wherever and however they can find it in order not to remain altogether without shelter and in this connection are absolutely defenceless and helpless," he tells us:

"For it is a well-known fact that many among them (the workers) from carelessness, but chiefly from ignorance, deprive their bodies, one is almost inclined to say, with virtuosity, of the conditions of natural development and healthy existence, in that they *have not the faintest idea* of rational hygiene and, in particular, of the enormous importance that attaches to the dwelling in this hygiene." (Page 27.)

Here however the bourgeois donkey's ears protrude. Where the capitalists are concerned "blame" evaporates into igno-



rance, but where the workers are concerned ignorance is made the cause of their guilt. Listen:

"Thus it comes (namely, through ignorance) that if they can only save something on the rent they will move into dark, damp and inadequate dwellings, which are in short a mockery of all the demands of hygiene ... that often several families together rent a single dwelling, and even a single room - all this in order to spend as little as possible on rent, while on the other hand they *squander* their income in truly sinful fashion on drink and all sorts of idle pleasures."

The money which the workers "waste on spirits and tobacco" (page 28), the "life in the pubs with all its regrettable consequences, which drags the workers again and again like a dead weight back into the mire", lies indeed like a dead weight in Herr Sax's stomach. The fact that under the existing circumstances drunkenness among the workers is a necessary product of their living conditions, just as necessary as typhus, crime, vermin, bailiff and other social ills, so necessary in fact that the average figures of those who succumb to inebriety can be calculated in advance, is again something that Herr Sax cannot allow himself to know. My old primary school teacher used to say, by the way: "The common people go to the pubs and the people of quality go to the clubs", and as I have been in both I am in a position to confirm it.

The whole talk about the "ignorance" of both parties amounts to nothing but the old phrases about the harmony of interests of labour and capital. If the capitalists knew their true interests, they would give the workers good houses and improve their position in general; and if the workers understood their true interests, they would not go on strike, they would not go in for Social-Democracy, they would not play politics, but would be nice and follow their betters, the capitalists. Unfortunately, both sides find their interests altogether elsewhere than in the sermons of Herr Sax and his countless predecessors. The gospel of harmony between capital and labour has been preached for almost fifty years now, and bourgeois philanthropy has expended large sums of money to prove this harmony by building model institutions; yet, as we

shall see later, we are today exactly where we were fifty years ago.

Our author now proceeds to the practical solution of the problem. How little revolutionary Proudhon's proposal to make the workers *owners* of their dwellings was can be seen from the fact that bourgeois socialism even before him tried to carry it out in practice and is still trying to do so. Herr Sax also declares that the housing problem can be completely solved only by transferring property in dwellings to the workers. (Pages 58 and 59.) More than that, he goes into poetic raptures at the idea, giving vent to his feelings in the following outburst of enthusiasm:

"There is something peculiar about the longing inherent in man to own land; it is an urge which not even the *feverishly pulsating business life* of the present day has been able to abate. It is the unconscious appreciation of the significance of the economic achievement represented by landownership. With it the individual obtains a secure hold; he is rooted firmly in the earth, as it were, and every enterprise (!) has its most permanent basis in it. However, the blessings of landownership extend far beyond these material advantages. Whoever is fortunate enough to call a piece of land his own has *reached the highest conceivable stage of economic independence*; he has a territory on which he can rule with *sovereign power*; he is *his own master*; he has a certain power and a *sure support* in time of need; his self-confidence develops and with this his moral strength. Hence the deep significance of property in the question before us.... The worker, today helplessly exposed to all the vicissitudes of economic life and in constant dependence on his employer, would thereby be saved to a certain extent from this precarious situation; *he would become a capitalist* and be safeguarded against the dangers of unemployment or incapacitation as a result of the credit which his real estate would open to him. *He would thus be raised from the ranks of the propertyless into the propertied class.*" (Page 63.)

Herr Sax seems to assume that man is essentially a peasant, otherwise he would not falsely impute to the workers of our big cities a longing to own land, a longing which no one else has discovered in them. For our workers in the big cities freedom of movement is the prime condition of existence, and landownership can only be a fetter to them. Give them their own houses, chain them once again to the soil and you break their power of resistance to the wage cutting of the factory owners. The individual worker might be able to sell

his house on occasion, but during a big strike or a general industrial crisis all the houses belonging to the workers affected would have to be put up for sale and would therefore find no purchasers or be sold off far below their cost price. And even if they all found purchasers, Herr Sax's whole grand housing reform would have come to nothing and he would have to start from the beginning again. However, poets live in a world of fantasy, and so does Herr Sax, who imagines that a landowner has "reached the highest stage of economic independence", that he has "a sure support", that "*he would become a capitalist* and be safeguarded against the dangers of unemployment or incapacitation as a result of the credit which his real estate would open to him", etc. Herr Sax should take a look at the French and our own Rhenish small peasants. Their houses and fields are loaded down with mortgages, their harvests belong to their creditors before they are reaped, and it is not they who rule with sovereign power on their "territory" but the usurer, the lawyer and the bailiff. That certainly represents the highest conceivable stage of economic independence—for the usurer! And in order that the workers may bring their little houses as quickly as possible under the same sovereignty of the usurer, our well-meaning Herr Sax carefully points to the *credit* which their *real estate* can secure them in times of unemployment or incapacitation instead of their becoming a burden on the poor rate.

In any case, Herr Sax has solved the question raised in the beginning: the worker "*becomes a capitalist*" by acquiring his own little house.

Capital is the command over the unpaid labour of others. The little house of the worker can therefore become capital only if he rents it to a third person and appropriates a part of the labour product of this third person in the form of rent. But the house is prevented from becoming capital precisely by the fact that the worker lives in it himself, just as a coat ceases to be capital the moment I buy it from the tailor and put it on. The worker who owns a little house to the value of a thousand talers is, true enough, no longer a proletarian, but it takes Herr Sax to call him a capitalist.

However, this capitalist streak of our worker has still another side. Let us assume that in a given industrial area it has become the rule that each worker owns his own little house. In that case *the working class of that area lives rent-free*; housing expenses no longer enter into the value of its labour power. Every reduction in the cost of production of labour power, that is to say, every permanent price reduction in the worker's necessities of life is equivalent "on the basis of the iron laws of the doctrine of national economy" to a depression of the value of labour power and will therefore finally result in a corresponding drop in wages. Wages would thus fall on an average as much as the average sum saved on rent, that is, the worker would pay rent for his own house, but not, as formerly, in money to the house-owner, but in unpaid labour to the factory owner for whom he works. In this way the savings of the worker invested in his little house would in a certain sense become capital, however not capital for him but for the capitalist employing him.

Herr Sax thus lacks the ability to turn his worker into a capitalist even on paper.

Incidentally, what has been said above applies to all so-called social reforms which can be reduced to saving schemes or to cheapening the means of subsistence of the worker. Either they become general and then they are followed by a corresponding reduction of wages or they remain quite isolated experiments and then their very existence as isolated exceptions proves that their realisation on an extensive scale is incompatible with the existing capitalist mode of production. Let us assume that in a certain area a general introduction of 'consumers' co-operatives succeeds in reducing the cost of the means of subsistence for the workers by 20 per cent. Hence in the long run wages would fall in that area by approximately 20 per cent, that is to say, in the same proportion as the means of subsistence in question enter into the budget of the workers. If the worker, for example, spends three-quarters of his weekly wage on these means of subsistence, wages would in the end fall by  $\frac{3}{4} \times 20 = 15$  per cent. In short, as soon as any such saving reform has become general, the worker's

wages diminish by as much as his savings permit him to live cheaper. Give *every* worker an independent income of 52 talers, achieved by saving, and his weekly wage must finally fall one taler. Therefore, the more he saves the less he will receive in wages. He saves, therefore, not in his own interest but in the interest of the capitalist. What else is needed "to stimulate" in him ... "in the most powerful fashion ... the primary economic virtue, thrift"? (Page 64.)

Moreover, Herr Sax tells us immediately afterwards that the workers are to become house-owners not so much in their own interest as in the interest of the capitalists:

"However, not only the working class but society as a whole has the greatest interest in seeing as many of its members as possible bound (!) to the land" (I should like to see Herr Sax himself even for once in this posture)<sup>a</sup> "...All the secret forces which set on fire the volcano called the social question which glows under our feet, the proletarian bitterness, the hatred ... the dangerous confusion of ideas, ... must all disappear like mist before the morning sun when ... the workers themselves enter in this fashion into the ranks of the propertied class." (Page 65.)

In other words, Herr Sax hopes that by a shift in their proletarian status, such as would be brought about by the acquisition of a house, the workers would also lose their proletarian character and become once again obedient toadies like their forefathers, who were also house-owners. The Proudhonists should lay this thing to heart.

Herr Sax believes he has thereby solved the social question:

"*A juster distribution of goods*, the riddle of the Sphinx which so many have already tried in vain to solve, does it not now lie before us as a tangible fact, has it not thereby been taken from the regions of ideals and brought into the realm of reality? And if it is carried out, does this not mean the achievement of one of the highest aims, one which even the *Socialists of the most extreme tendency present as the culminating point of their theories?*" (Page 66.)

It is really lucky that we have worked our way through as far as this, because this shout of triumph is the "summit" of

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<sup>a</sup> Inserted in *Volksstaat*: "Landed property ... reduces the number of those fighting the domination of the propertied class..."—*Ed.*

the Saxian book. From now on we once more gently descend from "the regions of ideals" to flat reality, and when we get down we shall find that nothing, nothing at all, has changed in our absence.

Our guide takes us the first step down by informing us that there are two systems of workers' dwellings: the cottage system, in which each working-class family has its own little house and if possible a little garden as well, as in England; and the barrack system of the large tenement houses containing numerous workers' dwellings, as in Paris, Vienna, etc. Between the two is the system prevailing in Northern Germany. Now it is true, he tells us, that the cottage system is the only correct one, and the *only one* whereby the worker can acquire the ownership of his own house; besides, he argues, the barrack system has very great disadvantages with regard to hygiene, morality and domestic peace. But, alas and alack! says he, the cottage system is not realisable in the centres of the housing shortage, in the big cities, on account of the high cost of land, and one should, therefore, be glad if houses were built containing from four to six flats instead of big barracks, or if the main disadvantages of the barrack system were alleviated by various ingenious building devices. (Pages 71-92.)

We have come down quite a bit already, haven't we? The transformation of the workers into capitalists, the solution of the social question, a house of his own for each worker—all these things have been left behind, up above in "the regions of ideals". All that remains for us to do is to introduce the cottage system into the countryside and to make the workers' barracks in the cities as tolerable as possible.

On its own admission, therefore, the bourgeois solution of the housing question has come to grief—it has come to grief owing to the *contrast between town and country*. And with this we have arrived at the kernel of the problem. The housing question can be solved only when society has been sufficiently transformed for a start to be made towards abolishing the contrast between town and country, which has been brought to its extreme point by present-day capitalist society. Far from being able to abolish this antithesis, capitalist society on the

contrary is compelled to intensify it day by day. On the other hand, already the first modern Utopian Socialists, Owen and Fourier, correctly recognised this. In their model structures the contrast between town and country no longer exists. Consequently there takes place exactly the opposite of what Herr Sax contends: it is not that the solution of the housing question simultaneously solves the social question, but that only by the solution of the social question, that is, by the abolition of the capitalist mode of production, is the solution of the housing question made possible. To want to solve the housing question while at the same time desiring to maintain the modern big cities is an absurdity. The modern big cities, however, will be abolished only by the abolition of the capitalist mode of production, and when this is once set going there will be quite other issues than supplying each worker with a little house of his own.

In the beginning, however, each social revolution will have to take things as it finds them and do its best to get rid of the most crying evils with the means at its disposal. And we have already seen that the housing *shortage* can be remedied immediately by expropriating a part of the luxury dwellings belonging to the propertied classes and by compulsory quartering in the remaining part....

...And with this we could close this section if it were not absolutely necessary to provide a little information about the English building societies, which the bourgeois of the Schulze-Delitzsch type always hold up to our workers as models.

These building societies are not workers' societies, nor is it their main aim to provide workers with their own houses. On the contrary, we shall see that this happens only very exceptionally. The building societies are essentially of a speculative nature, the small ones, which were the original societies, not less so than their big imitators. In a public house, usually at the instigation of the proprietor, on whose premises the weekly meetings then take place, a number of regular customers and their friends, shopkeepers, office clerks, commercial travellers, master artisans and other petty bourgeois—with here and there perhaps a mechanic or some other worker

belonging to the aristocracy of his class—get together and found a building co-operative. The immediate occasion is usually that the proprietor has discovered a comparatively cheap plot of land in the neighbourhood or somewhere else. Most of the members are not bound by their occupations to any particular locality. Even many of the shopkeepers and craftsmen have only business premises in the town but no living quarters. Everyone in a position to do so prefers to live in the suburbs rather than in the centre of the smoky town. The building plot is purchased and as many cottages as possible erected on it. The credit of the more substantial members makes the purchase possible, and the weekly contributions together with a few small loans cover the weekly costs of building. Those members who aim at getting a house of their own receive cottages by lot as they are completed, and the appropriate extra rent serves for the amortisation of the purchase price. The remaining cottages are then either let or sold. The building society, however, if it does good business, accumulates a more or less considerable sum. This remains the property of the members, provided they keep up their contributions, and is distributed among them from time to time, or when the society is dissolved. Such is the life history of nine out of ten of the English building societies. The others are bigger associations, sometimes formed under political or philanthropic pretexts, but in the end their chief aim is always to provide a more profitable mortgage investment for the savings of the *petty bourgeoisie*, at a good rate of interest and the prospect of dividends from speculation in real estate....

In reality the bourgeoisie has only one method of settling the housing question after *its* fashion—that is to say, of settling it in such a way that the solution continually poses the question anew. This method is called “*Haussmann*”.

By the term “*Haussmann*” I do not mean merely the specifically Bonapartist manner of the Parisian Haussmann—breaking long, straight and broad streets right through the closely-built workers’ quarters and lining them on both sides with big luxurious buildings, the intention having been, apart from the



strategic aim of making barricade fighting more difficult, to develop a specifically Bonapartist building trades' proletariat dependent on the government and to turn the city into a luxury city pure and simple. By "Hausmann" I mean the practice, which has now become general, of making breaches in the working-class quarters of our big cities, particularly in those which are centrally situated, irrespective of whether this practice is occasioned by considerations of public health and beautification or by the demand for big centrally located business premises or by traffic requirements, such as the laying down of railways, streets, etc. No matter how different the reasons may be, the result is everywhere the same: the most scandalous alleys and lanes disappear to the accompaniment of lavish self-glorification by the bourgeoisie on account of this tremendous success, but—they appear again at once somewhere else, and often in the immediate neighbourhood.

In *The Condition of the Working Class in England* I gave a picture of Manchester as it looked in 1843 and 1844. Since then the construction of railways through the centre of the city, the laying out of new streets and the erection of great public and private buildings have broken through, laid bare and improved some of the worst districts described there, others have been abolished altogether; although, apart from the fact that sanitary-police inspection has since become stricter, many of them are still in the same state or in an even worse state of dilapidation than they were then. On the other hand, thanks to the enormous extension of the town, whose population has since increased by more than a half, districts which were at that time still airy and clean are now just as overbuilt, just as dirty and congested as the most ill-famed parts of the town formerly were. Here is but one example: On page 80 *et seq.* of my book I described a group of houses situated in the valley bottom of the Medlock River, which under the name of Little Ireland was for years the disgrace of Manchester. Little Ireland has long ago disappeared and on its site there now stands a railway station built on a high foundation. The bourgeoisie pointed with pride to the happy and final abolition of Little Ireland as to a great triumph. Now last summer a great

inundation took place, as in general the rivers embanked in our big cities cause more and more extensive floods year after year for reasons that can be easily explained. And it was then revealed that Little Ireland had not been abolished at all, but had simply been shifted from the south side of Oxford Road to the north side, and that it still continues to flourish. Let us hear what the *Manchester Weekly Times*, the organ of the radical bourgeoisie of Manchester, has to say in its issue of July 20, 1872:

"The misfortune which befell the inhabitants of the lower valley of the Medlock last Saturday will, it is to be hoped, have *one* good result, namely, that public attention will be directed to the obvious mockery of all the laws of hygiene which has been tolerated there so long under the noses of our municipal officials and our municipal health committee. A trenchant article in our day edition yesterday revealed, though hardly forcibly enough, the scandalous condition of some of the cellar dwellings near Charles Street and Brook Street which were reached by the flood. A detailed examination of one of the courts mentioned in this article enables us to confirm all the statements made about them, and to declare that the cellar dwellings in this court should long ago have been closed down, or rather, they should never have been tolerated as human habitations. Squire's Court is made up of seven or eight dwelling houses on the corner of Charles Street and Brook Street. Even at the lowest part of Brook Street, under the railway viaduct, a pedestrian may pass daily and never dream that human beings are living far down, under his feet, in caves. The court itself is hidden from public view and is accessible only to those who are compelled by their impoverishment to seek a shelter in its sepulchral seclusion. Even if the usually stagnant waters of the Medlock, which are shut in between locks, do not exceed their usual level, the floors of those dwellings can hardly be more than a few inches above the surface of the river. A good shower of rain is capable of driving up foul, nauseous water through the drains and filling the rooms with pestilential gases such as every flood leaves behind it as a souvenir.... Squire's Court lies at a still lower level than the uninhabited cellars of the houses in Brook Street ... twenty feet below street level, and the noxious water driven up on Saturday through the drains reached to the roofs. We knew this and therefore expected that we should find the place uninhabited or occupied only by the sanitary officials engaged in washing off the stinking walls and disinfecting the houses. Instead of this we saw a man in the cellar home of a barber ... engaged in shovelling a heap of decomposing filth, which lay in a corner, on to a wheelbarrow. The barber, whose cellar was already more or less cleaned up, sent us still lower down to a number of dwellings about which he declared that, if he could write, he would have informed the press and demanded that they be closed down. And so finally we

came to Squire's Court where we found a buxom and healthy-looking Irish-woman busy at the wash-tub. She and her husband, a night watchman, had lived for six years in the court and had a numerous family.... In the house which they had just left the water had risen almost to the roof, the windows were broken and the furniture was completely ruined. The man declared that the occupant of the house had been able to keep the smells from becoming intolerable only by whitewashing it every two months... In the inner court into which our correspondent then went he found three houses whose rear walls abutted on the rear walls of the houses just described. Two of these three houses were inhabited. The stench there was so frightful that the healthiest man would have felt sick at the stomach in a very short-space of time.... This disgusting hole was inhabited by a family of seven, all of whom had slept in the place on Thursday night (the first day the water rose). Or rather, not slept, as the woman immediately corrected herself, for she and her husband had vomited continually the greater part of the night owing to the terrible smell. On Saturday they had been compelled to wade through the water, chest high, to carry out their children. Besides, she was of the opinion that the place was not fit for pigs to live in, but on account of the low rent—one and six pence a week—she had taken it, for her husband had been out of work a lot recently owing to sickness. The impression made upon the observer by this court and the inhabitants huddled in it as though in a premature grave was one of utter helplessness. We must point out, by the way, that, according to our observation, Squire's Court is no more than typical—though perhaps an extreme case—of many other places in the neighbourhood whose continued existence our health committee cannot justify. Should these places be permitted to be tenanted in the future, the committee assumes a responsibility and the whole neighbourhood exposes itself to a danger of epidemic infection whose gravity we shall not further discuss."

This is a striking example of how the bourgeoisie settles the housing question in practice. The breeding places of disease, the infamous holes and cellars in which the capitalist mode of production confines our workers night after night, are not abolished; they are merely *shifted elsewhere*! The same economic necessity which produced them in the first place produces them in the next place also. As long as the capitalist mode of production continues to exist it is folly to hope for an isolated settlement of the housing question or of any other social question affecting the lot of the workers. The solution lies in the abolition of the capitalist mode of production and the appropriation of all the means of subsistence and instruments of labour by the working class itself.

### Part three

## Supplement on Proudhon and the Housing Question

### I

In No. 86 of the *Volksstaat*, A. Mülberger reveals himself as the author of the articles criticised by me in No. 51 and subsequent numbers of the paper.<sup>a</sup> In his answer he overwhelms me with such a series of reproaches, and at the same time confuses all the issues to such an extent that willy-nilly I am compelled to reply to him. I shall attempt to give my reply, which to my regret must be made to a large extent in the field of personal polemics enjoined upon me by Mülberger himself, a general interest by presenting the chief points once again and if possible more clearly than before, even at the risk of being told once more by Mülberger that all this "contains nothing essentially new either for him or for the other readers of the *Volksstaat*".

Mülberger complains of the form and content of my criticism. As far as the form is concerned it will be sufficient to reply that at the time I did not even know who had written the articles in question. There can, therefore, be no question of any personal "prejudice" against their author; against the solution of the housing problem put forward in the articles I was of course in so far "prejudiced" as I was long ago acquainted with it from Proudhon and my opinion on it was firmly fixed.

I am not going to quarrel with friend Mülberger about the "tone" of my criticism. When one has been so long in the movement as I have, one develops a fairly thick skin against attacks, and therefore one easily presumes the existence of the same in others. In order to compensate Mülberger I shall endeavour this time to bring my "tone" into the right relation to the sensitiveness of his epidermis.

Mülberger complains with particular bitterness that I said he was a Proudhonist, and he protests that he is not.

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<sup>a</sup> See present edition, pp. 79-89. - *Ed.*

Naturally I must believe him, but I shall adduce proof that the articles in question—and I had to do with them alone—contain nothing but undiluted Proudhonism.

But according to Mülberger I have also criticised Proudhon “frivolously” and have done him a serious injustice.

“The doctrine of the petty bourgeois Proudhon has become an accepted dogma in Germany, which is even proclaimed by many who have never read a line of him.”

When I express regret that for twenty years the workers speaking Romance languages have had no other mental pabulum than the works of Proudhon, Mülberger answers that as far as the Latin workers are concerned, “the principles formulated by Proudhon are almost everywhere the driving spirit of the movement”. This I must deny. First of all, the “driving spirit” of the working-class movement nowhere lies in “principles”, but everywhere in the development of large-scale industry and its effects, the accumulation and concentration of capital, on the one hand, and of the proletariat, on the other. Secondly, it is not correct to say that in the Latin countries Proudhon’s so-called “principles” play the decisive role ascribed to them by Mülberger; that “the principles of anarchism, of the organisation of the *forces économiques*, of the *liquidation sociale*, etc., have there ... become the true bearers of the revolutionary movement”. Not to speak of Spain and Italy, where the Proudhonist panacea has gained some influence only in the still more botched form presented by Bakunin, it is a notorious fact for anyone who knows the international working-class movement that in France the Proudhonists form a numerically rather insignificant sect, while the mass of the French workers refuses to have anything to do with the social reform plan drawn up by Proudhon under the titles of *Liquidation sociale* and *Organisation des forces économiques*. This was shown, among other things, in the Commune. Although the Proudhonists were strongly represented in the Commune, not the slightest attempt was made to liquidate the old society or to organise the economic forces according to Proudhon’s proposals. On the contrary, it does the Commune the greatest

honour that in all its economic measures the "driving spirit" was not any set of "principles", but simple, practical needs. And therefore these measures—abolition of night work in the bakeries, prohibition of monetary fines in the factories, confiscation of shut-down factories and workshops and handing them over to workers' associations—were not at all in accordance with the spirit of Proudhonism, but certainly in accordance with the spirit of German scientific socialism. The only social measure which the Proudhonists put through was the decision *not* to confiscate the Bank of France, and this was partly responsible for the downfall of the Commune. In the same way, when the so-called Blanquists made an attempt to transform themselves from mere political revolutionists into a socialist workers' faction with a definite programme—as was done by the Blanquist fugitives in London in their manifesto, *Internationale et Révolution*<sup>59</sup>—they did not proclaim the "principles" of the Proudhonist plan for the salvation of society, but adopted, and almost literally at that, the views of German scientific socialism on the necessity of political action by the proletariat and of its dictatorship as the transition to the abolition of classes and, with them, of the state—views such as had already been expressed in the *Communist Manifesto* and since then on innumerable occasions. And if Mülberger even draws the conclusion from the Germans' disdain of Proudhon that there has been a lack of understanding of the movement in the Latin countries "down to the Paris Commune", let him as proof of this lack tell us what work from the Latin side has understood and described the Commune even approximately as correctly as has the *Address of the General Council of the International on the Civil War in France*, written by the German Marx.

The only country where the working-class movement is directly under the influence of Proudhonist "principles" is Belgium, and precisely as a result of this the Belgian movement comes, as Hegel would say, "from nothing through nothing to nothing".<sup>60</sup>

When I consider it a misfortune that for twenty years the workers of the Latin countries fed intellectually, directly or in-

directly, exclusively on Proudhon, I do not mean that thoroughly mythical dominance of Proudhon's reform recipe—termed by Mülberger the “principles”—but the fact that their economic criticism of existing society was contaminated with absolutely false Proudhonist phrases and that their political actions were bungled by Proudhonist influence. Whether thus the “Proudhonised workers of the Latin countries” “stand more in the revolution” than the German workers, who in any case understand the meaning of scientific German socialism infinitely better than the Latins understand their Proudhon, we shall be able to answer only after we have learnt what “to stand in the revolution” really means. We have heard talk of people who “stand in Christianity, in the true faith, in the grace of God”, etc. But “standing” in the revolution, in the most violent of all movements? Is, then, “the revolution” a dogmatic religion in which one must believe?

Mülberger further reproaches me with having asserted, in defiance of the express wording of his articles, that he had declared the housing question to be an exclusively working-class question.

This time Mülberger is really right. I overlooked the passage in question. It was irresponsible of me to overlook it, for it is one most characteristic of the whole tendency of his disquisition. Mülberger actually writes in plain words:

“As we have been so frequently and largely exposed to the *absurd* charge of pursuing a *class policy*, of striving for *class domination*, and such like, we wish to stress first of all and expressly that the housing question is by no means a question which affects the proletariat exclusively, but that, *on the contrary*, it interests to a quite prominent extent the *middle classes proper*, the small tradesmen, the petty bourgeoisie, the whole bureaucracy.... The housing question is precisely that point of social reform which more than any other seems appropriate to reveal the *absolute inner identity of the interests of the proletariat*, on the one hand, and the interests of the *middle classes proper* of society, on the other. The middle classes suffer just as much as, and *perhaps even more* than, the proletariat under the oppressive fetters of the rented dwelling.... Today the middle classes proper of society are faced with the question of whether they ... can summon sufficient strength ... to participate in the process of the transformation of society in alliance with the youthful, vigorous and energetic workers' party, a transformation *whose blessings will be enjoyed above all by them.*”

Friend Mülberger thus makes the following points here:

1. "We" do not pursue any "class policy" and do not strive for "class domination". But the German Social-Democratic Workers' Party, just *because* it is a *workers' party*, necessarily pursues a "class policy", the policy of the working class. Since each political party sets out to establish its rule in the state, so the German Social-Democratic Workers' Party is necessarily striving to establish *its* rule, the rule of the working class, hence "class domination". Moreover, *every* real proletarian party, from the English Chartists onward, has put forward a class policy, the organisation of the proletariat as an independent political party, as the primary condition of its struggle, and the dictatorship of the proletariat as the immediate aim of the struggle. By declaring this to be "absurd", Mülberger puts himself outside the proletarian movement and inside the camp of petty-bourgeois socialism.

2. The housing question has the advantage that it is not an exclusively working-class question, but a question which "interests to a quite prominent extent" the petty bourgeoisie, in that "the middle classes proper" suffer from it "just as much as, and perhaps even more than", the proletariat. If anyone declares that the petty bourgeoisie suffers, even if in one respect only, "perhaps even more than the proletariat", he can hardly complain if one counts him among the petty-bourgeois Socialists. Has Mülberger therefore any grounds for complaint when I say:

"It is largely with just such sufferings as these, which the working class endures in common with other classes, and particularly the petty bourgeoisie, that petty-bourgeois socialism, to which Proudhon belongs, prefers to occupy itself. And thus it is not at all accidental that our German Proudhonist seizes chiefly upon the housing question, which, as we have seen, is by no means exclusively a working-class question."<sup>a</sup>

3. There is an "absolute inner identity" between the interests of the "middle classes proper of society" and the interests of the proletariat, and it is not the proletariat, but these middle classes proper which will "enjoy above all" the "blessings" of the coming process of transformation of society.

The workers, therefore, are going to make the coming social revolution "above all" in the interests of the petty bourgeois-

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<sup>a</sup> See present edition, p. 82.—Ed.



sie. And furthermore, there is an absolute inner identity of the interests of the petty bourgeoisie and those of the proletariat. If the interests of the petty bourgeoisie have an inner identity with those of the workers, then those of the workers have an inner identity with those of the petty bourgeoisie. The petty-bourgeois standpoint has thus as much right to exist in the movement as the proletarian standpoint, and it is precisely the assertion of this equality of right that is called petty-bourgeois socialism.

It is therefore perfectly consistent when, on page 25 of the separate reprint,<sup>61</sup> Mülberger extols "petty industry" as the "actual *buttress* of society", "because in accordance with its very nature it combines within itself the three factors: labour-acquisition-possession, and because in the combination of these three factors it places no bounds to the capacity for development of the individual"; and when he reproaches modern industry in particular with destroying this nursery for the production of normal human beings and "making out of a virile *class* continually reproducing itself an unconscious *heap* of humans who do not know wither to direct their anxious gaze". The petty bourgeois is thus Mülberger's model human being and petty industry is Mülberger's model mode of production. Did I defame him, therefore, when I classed him among the petty-bourgeois Socialists?

As Mülberger rejects all responsibility for Proudhon, it would be superfluous to discuss here any further how Proudhon's reform plans aim at transforming all members of society into petty bourgeois and small peasants. It will be just as unnecessary to deal with the alleged identity of interests of the petty bourgeoisie and the workers. What is necessary is to be found already in the *Communist Manifesto* (Leipzig Edition, 1872, pp. 12 and 21.<sup>a</sup>)

The result of our examination is, therefore, that side by side with the "myth of the petty bourgeois Proudhon" appears the reality of the petty bourgeois Mülberger.

Written in May  
1872 - January 1873

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in  
three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 305-14, 323-34,  
342-43, 350-58

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<sup>a</sup> K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 494 and 509.-*Ed.*

## Frederick Engels

### •From *News from the International*

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In *England*, a few English members of the previous General Council whom, in The Hague, Marx had charged to their faces with corruption on grounds of documentary evidence and their own confession, to which they dared not retort a single word, provoked a split in the British Federal Council last December. They quit and called a separate congress of as many as *eleven* men about whom no one would even venture to say what sections, if any, they represented.

These eleven indignantly declared themselves against The Hague resolutions and lined up under the banner of the secessionists; in the lead among them were two foreigners, *Eccarius* and *Jung*. From then on there were two federal councils, but with the difference that the international one had nearly all the sections behind it, while the other, the secessionist one, represented no one but its own members. The latter put on this act for a few months, then quietly passed away. The English workers, schooled in the fifty years of their movement, simply will not put up with such buffoonery. The congress of the British International, on the other hand, met in Manchester on the 1st and 2nd of June, and ushered in a decidedly new stage in the English labour movement. Twenty-six delegates attended, representing the chief centres of English industry along with a few smaller places. The Federal Council's report differed from all earlier documents of its kind in that—in this innately law-abiding country—it claimed for the working class the right to *press home* its demands *by force*.

The congress approved the report, and resolved: the red flag is the flag of the British International; the working class

demands the return to the working people of not only all the landed property, but also of all the means of labour in general; an eight-hour normal working day is demanded for a start; the Spanish workers are congratulated on the establishment of the republic and the election of ten workers to the Cortes; the English government are urged at once to release the still imprisoned Irish Fenians.<sup>62</sup>

Those who know the history of the English labour movement will admit that no English labour congress has ever made such far-reaching demands before. In any case, this congress and the wretched demise of the separatist self-styled federal council have clarified the position of the English International.

Written on June 19-20,  
1873

Translated from the German

## Frederick Engels

### From *The English Elections*

The secret ballot has enabled a large number of workers who usually were politically passive to vote with impunity against their exploiters and against the party in which they rightly see that of the big barons of industry, namely, the Liberal Party. This is true even where most of these barons, following the prevailing fashion, have gone over to the Conservatives. If the Liberal Party in England does not represent large-scale industry as opposed to big landed property and high finance, it represents nothing at all.

Already the previous Parliament ranked below the average in its general intellectual level. It consisted mainly of the rural gentry and the sons of big landed proprietors, on the one hand, and of bankers, railway directors, brewers, manufacturers and sundry other rich upstarts, on the other; in between, a few statesmen, jurists and professors. Quite a number of the last-named representatives of the "intelligentsia" failed to get elected this time, so that the new Parliament represents big landed property and the money-bags even more exclusively than the preceding one. It differs, however, from the preceding one in comprising two new elements: two workers<sup>a</sup> and about fifty Irish Home Rulers.

As regards the workers it must be stated, to begin with, that no separate political working-class party has existed in England since the downfall of the Chartist Party in the fifties. This is understandable in a country in which the working

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<sup>a</sup> Alexander Macdonald and Thomas Burt.—*Ed.*

class has shared more than anywhere else in the advantages of the immense expansion of its large-scale industry. Nor could it have been otherwise in an England that ruled the world market; and certainly not in a country where the ruling classes have set themselves the task of carrying out, parallel with other concessions, one point of the Chartists' programme, the People's Charter, after another. Of the six points of the Charter two have already become law: the secret ballot and the abolition of property qualifications for the suffrage. The third, universal suffrage, has been introduced, at least approximately; the last three points are still entirely unfulfilled: annual parliaments, payment of members, and, most important, equal electoral areas.

Whenever the workers lately took part in general politics in particular organisations they did so almost exclusively as the extreme left wing of the "great Liberal Party" and in this role they were duped at each election according to all the rules of the game by the great Liberal Party. Then all of a sudden came the Reform Bill<sup>63</sup> which at one blow changed the political status of the workers. In all the big cities they now form the majority of the voters and in England the Government as well as the candidates for Parliament are accustomed to court the electorate. The chairmen and secretaries of Trade Unions and political working men's societies, as well as other well-known labour spokesmen who might be expected to be influential in their class, had overnight become important people. They were visited by Members of Parliament, by lords and other well-born rabble, and sympathetic enquiry was suddenly made into the wishes and needs of the working class. Questions were discussed with these "labour leaders" which formerly evoked a supercilious smile or the mere posture of which used to be condemned; and one contributed to collections for working-class purposes. It thereupon quite naturally occurred to the "labour leaders" that they should get themselves elected to Parliament, to which their high-class friends gladly agreed in general, but of course only for the purpose of frustrating as far as possible the election of workers in each particular case. Thus the matter got no further.

Nobody holds it against the "labour leaders" that they would have liked to get into Parliament. The shortest way would have been to proceed at once to form anew a strong workers' party with a definite programme, and the best political programme they could wish for was the People's Charter. But the Chartists' name was in bad odour with the bourgeoisie precisely because theirs had been an outspokenly proletarian party, and so, rather than continue the glorious tradition of the Chartists, the "labour leaders" preferred to deal with their aristocratic friends and be "respectable", which in England means acting like a *bourgeois*. Whereas under the old franchise the workers had to a certain extent been compelled to figure as the tail of the radical bourgeoisie, it was inexcusable to make them go on playing that part after the Reform Bill had opened the door of Parliament to at least sixty working-class candidates.

This was the turning point. In order to get into Parliament the "labour leaders" had recourse, in the first place, to the votes and money of the bourgeoisie and only in the second place to the votes of the workers themselves. But by doing so they ceased to be workers' candidates and turned themselves into bourgeois candidates. They did not appeal to a working-class party that still had to be formed but to the bourgeois "great Liberal Party". Among themselves they organised a mutual election assurance society, the Labour Representation League,<sup>64</sup> whose very slender means were derived in the main from bourgeois sources. But this was not all. The radical bourgeois has sense enough to realise that the election of workers to Parliament is becoming more and more inevitable; it is therefore in their interest to keep the prospective working-class candidates under their control and thus postpone their actual election as long as possible. For that purpose they have their Mr. *Samuel Morley*, a London millionaire, who does not mind spending a couple of thousand pounds in order, on the one hand, to be able to act as the commanding general of this sham labour general staff and, on the other, with its assistance to let himself be hailed by the masses as a friend of labour, out of gratitude for his duping the workers. And then,

about a year ago, when it became ever more likely that Parliament would be dissolved, Morley called his faithful together in the London Tavern. They all appeared, the Potters, Howells, Odgers, Haleses, Mottersheads, Cremers, Eccariuses and the rest of them – a conclave of people every one of whom had served, or at least had offered to serve, during the previous parliamentary elections, in the pay of the bourgeoisie, as an agitator for the “great Liberal Party”. Under Morley’s chairmanship this conclave drew up a “labour programme” to which any bourgeois could subscribe and which was to form the foundation of a mighty movement to chain the workers politically still more firmly to the bourgeoisie and, as these gentry thought, to get the “founders” into Parliament. Besides, dangling before their lustful eyes these “founders” already saw a goodly number of Morley’s five-pound notes with which they expected to line their pockets before the election campaign was over. But the whole movement fell through before it had fairly started. Mr. Morley locked his safe and the founders once more disappeared from the scene.

Four weeks ago Gladstone suddenly dissolved Parliament. The inevitable “labour leaders” began to breathe again: either they would get themselves elected or they would again become well-paid itinerant preachers of the cause of the “great Liberal Party”. But alas! the day appointed for the elections was so close that they were cheated out of both chances. True enough, a few did stand for Parliament; but since in England every candidate, before he can be voted upon, must contribute two hundred pounds (1,240 thaler) towards the election expenses and the workers had almost nowhere been organised for this purpose, only such of them could stand as candidates seriously as obtained this sum from the bourgeoisie i.e., as acted *with its gracious permission*. With this the bourgeoisie had done its duty and in the elections themselves allowed them all to suffer a complete fiasco.

Only two workers got in, both miners from coal pits. This trade is very strongly organised in three big unions, has considerable means at its disposal, controls an indisputed majority of the voters in some constituencies and has worked systemati-

cally for direct representation in Parliament ever since the Reform Acts were passed. The candidates put up were the secretaries of the three *Trade Unions*. The one, Halliday, lost out in Wales; the other two came out on top: *Macdonald* in *Stafford* and *Burt* in *Morpeth*. Burt is little known outside of his constituency. Macdonald, however, betrayed the workers of his trade when, during the negotiations on the last mining law, which he attended as the representative of his trade, he sanctioned an amendment which was so grossly in the interests of the capitalists that even the Government had not dared to include it in the draft.

At any rate, the ice has been broken and two workers now have seats in the most fashionable debating club of Europe, among those who have declared themselves the first gentlemen of Europe.

Written on February 22,  
1874

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Articles on  
Britain*, Progress Publishers, Moscow,  
1971, pp. 367-71



**Karl Marx**

*Critique of the Gotha Programme*<sup>65</sup>

**Letter to W. Bracke**

London, May 5, 1875

Dear Bracke,

When you have read the following critical marginal notes on the Unity Programme, would you be so good as to send them on to Geib and Auer, Bebel and Liebknecht for examination. I am exceedingly busy and have to overstep by far the limit of work allowed me by the doctors. Hence it was anything but a "pleasure" to write such a lengthy screed. It was however necessary so that the steps to be taken by me later on would not be misinterpreted by our friends in the Party for whom this communication is intended.

After the Unity Congress has been held, Engels and I will publish a short statement to the effect that our position is altogether remote from the said programme of principles and that we have nothing to do with it.

This is indispensable because the opinion—the entirely erroneous opinion—is held abroad and assiduously nurtured by enemies of the Party that we secretly guide from here the movement of the so-called Eisenach Party.<sup>66</sup> In a Russian book that has recently appeared, Bakunin still makes me responsible, for example, not only for all the programmes, etc., of that party but even for every step taken by Liebknecht from the day of his cooperation with the People's Party.<sup>67</sup>

Apart from this, it is my duty not to give recognition, even by diplomatic silence, to what in my opinion is a thoroughly objectionable programme that demoralises the Party.

Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes. If, therefore, it was not possible—and the

conditions of the time did not permit it—to go *beyond* the Eisenach programme, one should simply have concluded an agreement for action against the common enemy. But by drawing up a programme of principles (instead of postponing this until it has been prepared for by a considerable period of common activity) one sets up before the whole world landmarks by which it measures the level of the Party movement.

The Lassallean leaders<sup>68</sup> came because circumstances forced them to. If they had been told in advance that there would be haggling about principles, they would *have had* to be content with a programme of action or a plan of organisation for common action. Instead of this, one permits them to arrive armed with mandates, recognises these mandates on one's part as binding, and thus surrenders unconditionally to those who are themselves in need of help: To crown the whole business, they are holding a congress *before the Congress of Compromise*, while one's own party is holding its congress *post festum*.<sup>a</sup> One had obviously had a desire to stifle all criticism and to give one's own party no opportunity for reflection. One knows that the mere fact of unification is satisfying to the workers, but it is a mistake to believe that this momentary success is not bought too dearly.

For the rest, the programme is no good, even apart from its sanctification of the Lassallean articles of faith....

### **Marginal Notes to the Programme of the German Workers' Party**

#### **I**

1. "Labour is the source of all wealth and all culture, *and since* useful labour is possible only in society and through society, the proceeds of labour belong undiminished with equal right to all members of society."

*First Part of the Paragraph:* "Labour is the source of all wealth and all culture."

Labour is *not the source* of all wealth. *Nature* is just as much the source of use values (and it is surely of such that material

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<sup>a</sup> After the event.—Ed.

wealth consists!) as labour, which itself is only the manifestation of a force of nature, human labour power. The above phrase is to be found in all children's primers and is correct in so far as it is *implied* that labour is performed with the appropriate subjects and instruments. But a socialist programme cannot allow such bourgeois phrases to pass over in silence the *conditions* that alone give them meaning. And in so far as man from the beginning behaves towards nature, the primary source of all instruments and subjects of labour, as an owner, treats her as belonging to him, his labour becomes the source of use values, therefore also of wealth. The bourgeois have very good grounds for falsely ascribing *supernatural creative power* to labour; since precisely from the fact that labour depends on nature it follows that the man who possesses no other property than his labour power must, in all conditions of society and culture, be the slave of other men who have made themselves the owners of the material conditions of labour. He can work only with their permission, hence live only with their permission.

Let us now leave the sentence as it stands, or rather limps. What would one have expected in conclusion? Obviously this:

"Since labour is the source of all wealth, no one in society can appropriate wealth except as the product of labour. Therefore, if he himself does not work, he lives by the labour of others and also acquires his culture at the expense of the labour of others."

Instead of this, by means of the verbal rivet "*and since*" a second proposition is added in order to draw a conclusion from this and not from the first one.

*Second Part of the Paragraph:* "Useful labour is possible only in society and through society."

According to the first proposition, labour was the source of all wealth and all culture; therefore no society is possible without labour. Now we learn, conversely, that no "useful" labour is possible without society.

One could just as well have said that only in society can useless and even socially harmful labour become a branch of gainful occupation, that only in society can one live by being

idle, etc., etc.—in short, one could just as well have copied the whole of Rousseau.

And what is “useful” labour? Surely only labour which produces the intended useful result. A savage—and man was a savage after he had ceased to be an ape—who kills an animal with a stone, who collects fruits, etc., performs “useful” labour.

*Thirdly. The Conclusion:* “And since useful labour is possible only in society and through society, the proceeds of labour belong undiminished with equal right to all members of society.”

A fine conclusion! If useful labour is possible only in society and through society, the proceeds of labour belong to society—and only so much therefrom accrues to the individual worker as is not required to maintain the “condition” of labour, society.

In fact, this proposition has at all times been made use of by the *champions of the state of society prevailing at any given time*. First come the claims of the government and everything that sticks to it, since it is the social organ for the maintenance of the social order; then come the claims of the various kinds of private property, for the various kinds of private property are the foundations of society, etc. One sees that such hollow phrases can be twisted and turned as desired.

The first and second parts of the paragraph have some intelligible connection only in the following wording:

“Labour becomes the source of wealth and culture only as social labour”, or, what is the same thing, “in and through society”.

This proposition is incontestably correct, for although isolated labour (its material conditions presupposed) can create use values, it can create neither wealth nor culture.

But equally incontestable is this other proposition:

“In proportion as labour develops socially, and becomes thereby a source of wealth and culture, poverty and destitution develop among the workers, and wealth and culture among the non-workers.”

This is the law of all history hitherto. What, therefore, had

to be done here, instead of setting down general phrases about "labour" and "society", was to prove concretely how in present capitalist society the material, etc., conditions have at last been created which enable and compel the workers to lift this social curse.

In fact, however, the whole paragraph, bungled in style and content, is only there in order to inscribe the Lassallean catchword of the "undiminished proceeds of labour" as a slogan at the top of the party banner. I shall return later to the "proceeds of labour", "equal right", etc., since the same thing recurs in a somewhat different form further on.

2. "In present-day society, the instruments of labour are the monopoly of the capitalist class; the resulting dependence of the working class is the cause of misery and servitude in all its forms."

This sentence, borrowed from the Rules of the International, is incorrect in this "improved" edition.

In present-day society the instruments of labour are the monopoly of the landowners (the monopoly of property in land is even the basis of the monopoly of capital) *and* the capitalists. In the passage in question, the Rules of the International do not mention either the one or the other class of monopolists. They speak of the "*monopoliser of the means of labour, that is, the sources of life*". The addition, "sources of life", makes it sufficiently clear that land is included in the instruments of labour.

The correction was introduced because Lassalle, for reasons now generally known, attacked *only* the capitalist class and not the landowners. In England, the capitalist is usually not even the owner of the land on which his factory stands.

3. "The emancipation of labour demands the promotion of the instruments of labour to the common property of society and the co-operative regulation of the total labour with a fair distribution of the proceeds of labour."

"Promotion of the instruments of labour to the common property" ought obviously to read their "conversion into the common property"; but this only in passing.

What are "*proceeds of labour*"? The product of labour or its value? And in the latter case, is it the total value of the product or only that part of the value which labour has newly added to the value of the means of production consumed?

"Proceeds of labour" is a loose notion which Lassalle has put in the place of definite economic conceptions.

What is "a fair distribution"?

Do not the bourgeois assert that the present-day distribution is "fair"? And is it not, in fact, the only "fair" distribution on the basis of the present-day mode of production? Are economic relations regulated by legal conceptions or do not, on the contrary, legal relations arise from economic ones? Have not also the socialist sectarians the most varied notions about "fair" distribution?

To understand what is implied in this connection by the phrase "fair distribution", we must take the first paragraph and this one together. The latter presupposes a society wherein "the instruments of labour are common property and the total labour is co-operatively regulated", and from the first paragraph we learn that "the proceeds of labour belong undiminished with equal right to all members of society".

"To all members of society"? To those who do not work as well? What remains then of the "undiminished proceeds of labour?" Only those members of society who work? What remains then of the "equal right" of all members of society?

But "all members of society" and "equal right" are obviously mere phrases. The kernel consists in this, that in this communist society every worker must receive the "undiminished" Lassallean "proceeds of labour".

Let us take first of all the words "proceeds of labour" in the sense of the product of labour; then the co-operative proceeds of labour are the *total social product*.

From this must now be deducted:

- First*, cover for replacement of the means of production used up.
- *Secondly*, additional portion for expansion of production.
- Thirdly*, reserve or insurance funds to provide against accidents, dislocations caused by natural calamities, etc.

These deductions from the "undiminished proceeds of labour" are an economic necessity and their magnitude is to be determined according to available means and forces, and partly by computation of probabilities, but they are in no way calculable by equity.

There remains the other part of the total product, intended to serve as means of consumption.

Before this is divided among the individuals, there has to be deducted again, from it:

*First, the general costs of administration not belonging to production.*

This part will, from the outset, be very considerably restricted in comparison with present-day society and it diminishes in proportion as the new society develops.

*Secondly, that which is intended for the common satisfaction of needs, such as schools, health services, etc.*

From the outset this part grows considerably in comparison with present-day society and it grows in proportion as the new society develops.

*Thirdly, funds for those unable to work, etc., in short, for what is included under so-called official poor relief today.*

Only now do we come to the "distribution" which the programme, under Lassalleian influence, alone has in view in its narrow fashion, namely, to that part of the means of consumption which is divided among the individual producers of the co-operative society.

The "undiminished proceeds of labour" have already unnoticeably become converted into the "diminished" proceeds, although what the producer is deprived of in his capacity as a private individual benefits him directly or indirectly in his capacity as a member of society.

Just as the phrase of the "undiminished proceeds of labour" has disappeared, so now does the phrase of the "proceeds of labour" disappear altogether.

Within the co-operative society based on common ownership of the means of production, the producers do not exchange their products; just as little does the labour employed on the products appear here *as the value* of these products, as a material quality possessed by them, since now,

in contrast to capitalist society, individual labour no longer exists in an indirect fashion but directly as a component part of the total labour. The phrase "proceeds of labour", objectionable also today on account of its ambiguity, thus loses all meaning.

What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it *emerges* from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birth marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges. Accordingly, the individual producer receives back from society—after the deductions have been made—exactly what he gives to it. What he has given to it is his individual quantum of labour. For example, the social working day consists of the sum of the individual hours of work; the individual labour time of the individual producer is the part of the social working day contributed by him, his share in it. He receives a certificate from society that he has furnished such and such an amount of labour (after deducting his labour for the common funds), and with this certificate he draws from the social stock of means of consumption as much as costs the same amount of labour. The same amount of labour which he has given to society in one form he receives back in another.

Here obviously the same principle prevails as that which regulates the exchange of commodities, as far as this is exchange of equal values. Content and form are changed, because under the altered circumstances no one can give anything except his labour, and because, on the other hand, nothing can pass to the ownership of individuals except individual means of consumption. But, as far as the distribution of the latter among the individual producers is concerned, the same principle prevails as in the exchange of commodity-equivalents: a given amount of labour in one form is exchanged for an equal amount of labour in another form.

Hence, *equal right* here is still in principle—*bourgeois right*, although principle and practice are no longer at loggerheads, while the exchange of equivalents in commodity exchange only exists *on the average* and not in the individual case.



In spite of this advance, this *equal right* is still constantly stigmatised by a bourgeois limitation. The right of the producers is *proportional* to the labour they supply; the equality consists in the fact that measurement is made with an *equal standard*, labour.

But one man is superior to another physically or mentally and so supplies more labour in the same time, or can labour for a longer time; and labour, to serve as a measure, must be defined by its duration or intensity, otherwise it ceases to be a standard of measurement. This *equal right* is an unequal right for unequal labour. It recognises no class differences, because everyone is only a worker like everyone else; but it tacitly recognises unequal individual endowment and thus productive capacity as natural privileges. *It is, therefore, a right of inequality, in its content, like every right.* Right by its very nature can consist only in the application of an equal standard; but unequal individuals (and they would not be different individuals if they were not unequal) are measurable only by an equal standard in so far as they are brought under an equal point of view, are taken from one *definite* side only, for instance, in the present case, are regarded *only as workers* and nothing more is seen in them, everything else being ignored. Further, one worker is married, another not; one has more children than another, and so on and so forth. Thus, with an equal performance of labour, and hence an equal share in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on. To avoid all these defects, right instead of being equal would have to be unequal.

But these defects are inevitable in the first phase of communist society as it is when it has just emerged after prolonged birth pangs from capitalist society. Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development conditioned thereby.

In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not only a

means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!

I have dealt more at length with the “undiminished proceeds of labour”, on the one hand, and with “equal right” and “fair distribution”, on the other, in order to show what a crime it is to attempt, on the one hand, to force on our Party again, as dogmas, ideas which in a certain period had some meaning but have now become obsolete verbal rubbish, while again perverting, on the other, the realistic outlook, which it cost so much effort to instil into the Party but which has now taken root in it, by means of ideological nonsense about right and other trash so common among the democrats and French Socialists.

Quite apart from the analysis so far given, it was in general a mistake to make a fuss about so-called *distribution* and put the principal stress on it.

Any distribution whatever of the means of consumption is only a consequence of the distribution of the conditions of production themselves. The latter distribution, however, is a feature of the mode of production itself. The capitalist mode of production, for example, rests on the fact that the material conditions of production are in the hands of non-workers in the form of property in capital and land, while the masses are only owners of the personal condition of production, of labour power. If the elements of production are so distributed, then the present-day distribution of the means of consumption results automatically. If the material conditions of production are the co-operative property of the workers themselves, then there likewise results a distribution of the means of consumption different from the present one. Vulgar socialism (and from it in turn a section of the democracy) has taken over from the bourgeois economists the consideration and treatment of distribution as independent of the mode of production

and hence the presentation of socialism as turning principally on distribution. After the real relation has long been made clear, why retrogress again?

4. "The emancipation of labour must be the work of the working class, relatively to which all other classes are *only one reactionary mass*."

The first strophe is taken from the introductory words of the Rules of the International, but "improved". There it is said: "The emancipation of the working class must be the act of the workers themselves"; here, on the contrary, the "working class" has to emancipate—what? "Labour." Let him understand who can.

In compensation, the antistrophe, on the other hand, is a Lassallean quotation of the first water: "relatively to which (the working class) all other classes are *only one reactionary mass*".

In the *Communist Manifesto* it is said: "Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a *really revolutionary class*. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product."<sup>a</sup>

The bourgeoisie is here conceived as a revolutionary class—as the bearer of large-scale industry—relatively to the feudal lords and the lower middle class, who desire to maintain all social positions that are the creation of obsolete modes of production. Thus they do not form *together* with the *bourgeoisie* *only one reactionary mass*.

On the other hand, the proletariat is revolutionary relatively to the bourgeoisie because, having itself grown up on the basis of large-scale industry, it strives to strip off from production the capitalist character that the bourgeoisie seeks to perpetuate. But the *Manifesto* adds that the "lower middle class" is becoming revolutionary "in view of [its] impending transfer into the proletariat".

From this point of view, therefore, it is again nonsense to say that it, together with the bourgeoisie, and with the feudal

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<sup>a</sup> K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 494.—*Ed.*

lords into the bargain, "forms only one reactionary mass" relatively to the working class.

Has one proclaimed to the artisans, small manufacturers, etc., and *peasants* during the last elections: Relatively to us you, together with the bourgeoisie and feudal lords, form only one reactionary mass?

Lassalle knew the *Communist Manifesto* by heart, as his faithful followers know the gospels written by him. If, therefore, he has falsified it so grossly, this has occurred only to put a good colour on his alliance with absolutist and feudal opponents against the bourgeoisie.

In the above paragraph, moreover, his oracular saying is dragged in by main force without any connection with the botched quotation from the Rules of the International. Thus it is here simply an impertinence, and indeed not at all displeasing to Herr Bismarck, one of those cheap pieces of insolence in which the Marat of Berlin<sup>69</sup> deals.

5. "The working class strives for its emancipation first of all *within the framework of the present-day national state*, conscious that the necessary result of its efforts, which are common to the workers of all civilised countries, will be the international brotherhood of peoples."

Lassalle, in opposition to the *Communist Manifesto* and to all earlier socialism, conceived the workers' movement from the narrowest national standpoint. He is being followed in this—and that after the work of the International!

It is altogether self-evident that, to be able to fight at all, the working class must organise itself at home *as a class* and that its own country is the immediate arena of its struggle. In so far its class struggle is national, not in substance, but, as the *Communist Manifesto* says, "in form". But the "framework of the present-day national state", for instance, the German Empire, is itself in its turn economically "within the framework" of the world market, politically "within the framework" of the system of states. Every businessman knows that German trade is at the same time foreign trade, and the greatness of Herr Bismarck consists, to be sure, precisely in his pursuing a kind of *international* policy.

And to what does the German workers' party reduce its internationalism? To the consciousness that the result of its efforts will be "*the international brotherhood of peoples*"—a phrase borrowed from the bourgeois League of Peace and Freedom,<sup>70</sup> which is intended to pass as equivalent to the international brotherhood of the working classes in the joint struggle against the ruling classes and their governments. Not a word, therefore, *about the international functions* of the German working class! And it is thus that it is to challenge its own bourgeoisie—which is already linked up in brotherhood against it with the bourgeois of all other countries—and Herr Bismarck's international policy of conspiracy!

In fact, the internationalism of the programme stands *even infinitely below* that of the Free Trade Party. The latter also asserts that the result of its efforts will be "the international brotherhood of peoples". But it also *does something to make* trade international and by no means contents itself with the consciousness—that all peoples are carrying on trade at home.

The international activity of the working classes does not in any way depend on the existence of the *International Working Men's Association*. This was only the first attempt to create a central organ for that activity; an attempt which was a lasting success on account of the impulse which it gave but which was no longer realisable in its *first historical form* after the fall of the Paris Commune.

Bismarck's *Norddeutsche* was absolutely right when it announced, to the satisfaction of its master, that the German workers' party had sworn off internationalism in the new programme.<sup>71</sup>

## II

"Starting from these basic principles, the German workers' party strives by all legal means for the *free state—and—socialist* society: the abolition of the wage system *together with the iron law of wages—and—*exploitation in every form; the elimination of all social and political inequality."

I shall return to the "free" state later.

So, in future, the German workers' party has got to believe in Lassalle's "iron law of wages"! That this may not be lost, the nonsense is perpetrated of speaking of the "abolition of the wage system" (it should read: system of wage labour) "*together with the iron law of wages*". If I abolish wage labour, then naturally I abolish its laws also, whether they are of "iron" or sponge. But Lassalle's attack on wage labour turns almost solely on this so-called law. In order, therefore, to prove that Lassalle's sect has conquered, the "wage system" must be abolished "*together with the iron law of wages*" and not without it.

It is well known that nothing of the "iron law of wages" is Lassalle's except the word "iron" borrowed from Goethe's "great, eternal iron laws".<sup>a</sup> The word *iron* is a label by which the true believers recognise one another. But if I take the law with Lassalle's stamp on it and, consequently, in his sense, then I must also take it with his substantiation for it. And what is that? As Lange already showed, shortly after Lassalle's death, it is the Malthusian theory of population (preached by Lange himself). But if this theory is correct, then again I *cannot* abolish the law even if I abolish wage labour a hundred times over, because the law then governs not only the system of wage labour but *every* social system. Basing themselves directly on this, the economists have been proving for fifty years and more that socialism cannot abolish poverty, *which has its basis in nature*, but can only make it *general*, distribute it simultaneously over the whole surface of society!

But all this is not the main thing. *Quite apart from the false Lassallean formulation of the law*, the truly outrageous retrogression consists in the following:

Since Lassalle's death there has asserted itself in *our* Party the scientific understanding that *wages* are not what they *appear* to be, namely, the *value*, or *price*, of *labour*, but only a masked form for the *value*, or *price*, of *labour power*. Thereby the whole bourgeois conception of wages hitherto, as well as all

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<sup>a</sup> Quoted from Goethe's "Das Göttliche".—Ed.

the criticism hitherto directed against this conception, was thrown overboard once for all and it was made clear that the wage-worker has permission to work for his own subsistence, that is, *to live*, only in so far as he works for a certain time gratis for the capitalist (and hence also for the latter's co-consumers of surplus value); that the whole capitalist system of production turns on the increase of this gratis labour by extending the working day or by developing the productivity, that is, increasing the intensity of labour power, etc.; that, consequently, the system of wage labour is a system of slavery, and indeed of a slavery which becomes more severe in proportion as the social productive forces of labour develop, whether the worker receives better or worse payment. And after this understanding has gained more and more ground in our Party, one returns to Lassalle's dogmas although one must have known that Lassalle *did not know* what wages were, but following in the wake of the bourgeois economists took the appearance for the essence of the matter.

It is as if, among slaves who have at last got behind the secret of slavery and broken out in rebellion, a slave still in thrall to obsolete notions were to inscribe on the programme of the rebellion: Slavery must be abolished because the feeding of slaves in the system of slavery cannot exceed a certain low maximum!

Does not the mere fact that the representatives of our Party were capable of perpetrating such a monstrous attack on the understanding that has spread among the mass of our Party prove by itself with what criminal levity and with what lack of conscience they set to work in drawing up this compromise programme!

Instead of the indefinite concluding phrase of the paragraph, "the elimination of all social and political inequality", it ought to have been said that with the abolition of class distinctions all social and political inequality arising from them would disappear of itself.

### III

"The German workers' party, in order to *pave the way to the solution of the social question*, demands the establishment of producers' co-opera-

*tive societies with state aid under the democratic control of the toiling people. The producers' co-operative societies are to be called into being for industry and agriculture on such a scale that the socialist organisation of the total labour will arise from them."*

After the Lassallean "iron law of wages", the physic of the prophet. The way to it is "paved" in worthy fashion. In place of the existing class struggle appears a newspaper scribbler's phrase: "the social *question*", to the "*solution*" of which one "paves the way". Instead of arising from the revolutionary process of transformation of society, the "socialist organisation of the total labour" "arises" from the "state aid" that the state gives to the producers' co-operative societies and which the *state*, not the worker, "*calls into being*". It is worthy of Lassalle's imagination that with state loans one can build a new society just as well as a new railway!

From the remnants of a sense of shame, "state aid" has been put—under the democratic control of the "toiling people".

In the first place, the majority of the "toiling people" in Germany consists of peasants, and not of proletarians.

Secondly, "democratic" means in German "*volksherrschaftlich*" ["by the rule of the people"]. But what does "control by the rule of the people of the toiling people" mean? And particularly in the case of a toiling people which, through these demands that it puts to the state, expresses its full consciousness that it neither rules nor is ripe for ruling!

It would be superfluous to deal here with the criticism of the recipe prescribed by Buchez in the reign of Louis Philippe in *opposition* to the French Socialists and accepted by the reactionary workers of the *Atelier*.<sup>72</sup> The chief offence does not lie in having inscribed this specific nostrum in the programme, but in taking, in general, a retrograde step from the standpoint of a class movement to that of a sectarian movement.

That the workers desire to establish the conditions for co-operative production on a social scale, and first of all on a national scale, in their own country, only means that they are working to revolutionise the present conditions of production, and it has nothing in common with the foundation of co-oper-



ative societies with state aid. But as far as the present co-operative societies are concerned, they are of value *only* in so far as they are the independent creations of the workers and not protégés either of the governments or of the bourgeois.\*

#### IV

I come now to the democratic section.

##### A. "*The free basis of the state.*"

First of all, according to II, the German workers' party strives for "the free state".

Free state—what is this?

It is by no means the aim of the workers, who have got rid of the narrow mentality of humble subjects, to set the state free. In the German Empire the "state" is almost as "free" as in Russia. Freedom consists in converting the state from an organ superimposed upon society into one completely subordinate to it, and today, too, the forms of state are more free or less free to the extent that they restrict the "freedom of the state".

The German workers' party—at least if it adopts the programme—shows that its socialist ideas are not even skin-deep; in that, instead of treating existing society (and this holds good for any future one) as the *basis* of the existing *state* (or of the future state in the case of future society), it treats the state rather as an independent entity that possesses its own "*intellectual, ethical and libertarian bases*".

And what of the riotous misuse which the programme makes of the words "*present-day state*", "*present-day society*", and of the still more riotous misconception it creates in regard to the state to which it addresses its demands?

"Present-day society" is capitalist society, which exists in all civilised countries, more or less free from medieval admixture, more or less modified by the particular historical development of each country, more or less developed. On the other hand, the "present-day state" changes with a country's frontier. It is different in the Prusso-German Empire from what it is in

Switzerland, and different in England from what it is in the United States. "The present-day state" is, therefore, a fiction.

Nevertheless, the different states of the different civilised countries, in spite of their motley diversity of form, all have this in common, that they are based on modern bourgeois society, only one more or less capitalistically developed. They have, therefore, also certain essential characteristics in common. In this sense it is possible to speak of the "present-day state", in contrast with the future, in which its present root, bourgeois society, will have died off.

The question then arises: what transformation will the state undergo in communist society? In other words, what social functions will remain in existence there that are analogous to present state functions? This question can only be answered scientifically, and one does not get a flea-hop nearer to the problem by a thousandfold combination of the word "people" with the word "state".

Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*.

Now the programme does not deal with this nor with the future state of communist society.

Its political demands contain nothing beyond the old democratic litany familiar to all: universal suffrage, direct legislation, popular rights, a people's militia, etc. They are a mere echo of the bourgeois People's Party, of the League of Peace and Freedom. They are all demands which, in so far as they are not exaggerated in fantastic presentation, have already been realised. Only the state to which they belong does not lie within the borders of the German Empire, but in Switzerland, the United States, etc. This sort of "state of the future" is a *present-day state*, although existing outside the "framework" of the German Empire.

But one thing has been forgotten. Since the German workers' party expressly declares that it acts within "the present-day national state", hence within its own state, the Prus-

so-German Empire—its demands would indeed otherwise be largely meaningless, since one only demands what one has not got—it should not have forgotten the chief thing, namely, that all those pretty little gewgaws rest on the recognition of the so-called sovereignty of the people and hence are appropriate only in a *democratic republic*.

Since one has not the courage—and wisely so, for the circumstances demand caution—to demand the democratic republic, as the French workers' programmes under Louis Philippe and under Louis Napoleon did, one should not have resorted, either, to the subterfuge, neither "honest" nor decent, of demanding things which have meaning only in a democratic republic from a state which is nothing but a police-guarded military despotism, embellished with parliamentary forms, alloyed with a feudal admixture, already influenced by the bourgeoisie and bureaucratically carpentered, and then to assure this state into the bargain that one imagines one will be able to force such things upon it "by legal means".

Even vulgar democracy, which sees the millennium in the democratic republic and has no suspicion that it is precisely in this last form of state of bourgeois society that the class struggle has to be fought out to a conclusion—even it towers mountains above this kind of democratism which keeps within the limits of what is permitted by the police and not permitted by logic.

That, in fact, by the word "state" is meant the government machine, or the state in so far as it forms a special organism separated from society through division of labour, is shown by the words "the German workers' party demands *as the economic basis of the state*: a single progressive income tax", etc. Taxes are the economic basis of the government machinery and of nothing else. In the state of the future, existing in Switzerland, this demand has been pretty well fulfilled. Income tax presupposes various sources of income of the various social classes, and hence capitalist society. It is, therefore, nothing remarkable that the Liverpool financial reformers, bourgeois

headed by Gladstone's brother, are putting forward the same demand as the programme.

- B. "The German workers' party demands as the intellectual and ethical basis of the state:

"1. Universal and *equal elementary education* by the state. Universal compulsory school attendance. Free instruction."

*Equal elementary education?* What idea lies behind these words? Is it believed that in present-day society (and it is only with this one has to deal) education can be *equal* for all classes? Or is it demanded that the upper classes also shall be compulsorily reduced to the modicum of education—the elementary school—that alone is compatible with the economic conditions not only of the wage-workers but of the peasants as well?

"Universal compulsory school attendance. Free instruction." The former exists even in Germany, the second in Switzerland and in the United States in the case of elementary schools. If in some states of the latter country higher educational institutions are also "free" that only means in fact defraying the cost of the education of the upper classes from the general tax receipts. Incidentally, the same holds good for "free administration of justice" demanded under A, 5. The administration of criminal justice is to be had free everywhere; that of civil justice is concerned almost exclusively with conflicts over property and hence affects almost exclusively the possessing classes. Are they to carry on their litigation at the expense of the national coffers?

The paragraph on the schools should at least have demanded technical schools (theoretical and practical) in combination with the elementary school.

"*Elementary education by the state*" is altogether objectionable. Defining by a general law the expenditures on the elementary schools, the qualifications of the teaching staff, the branches of instruction, etc., and, as is done in the United States, supervising the fulfilment of these legal specifications by state inspectors, is a very different thing from appointing the state as

the educator of the people! Government and Church should rather be equally excluded from any influence on the school. Particularly, indeed, in the Prusso-German Empire (and one should not take refuge in the rotten subterfuge that one is speaking of a "state of the future"; we have seen how matters stand in this respect) the state has need, on the contrary, of a very stern education by the people.

But the whole programme, for all its democratic clang, is tainted through and through by the Lassallean sect's servile belief in the state, or, what is no better, by a democratic belief in miracles, or rather it is a compromise between these two kinds of belief in miracles, both equally remote from socialism.

"*Freedom of science*" says a paragraph of the Prussian Constitution. Why, then, here?

"*Freedom of conscience*"! If one desired at this time of the *Kulturkampf*<sup>73</sup> to remind liberalism of its old catchwords, it surely could have been done only in the following form: Everyone should be able to attend to his religious as well as his bodily needs without the police sticking their noses in. But the workers' party ought at any rate in this connection to have expressed its awareness of the fact that bourgeois "freedom of conscience" is nothing but the toleration of all possible kinds of *religious freedom of conscience*, and that for its part it endeavours rather to liberate the conscience from the witchery of religion. But one chooses not to transgress the "bourgeois" level.

I have now come to the end, for the appendix that now follows in the programme does not constitute a characteristic component part of it. Hence I can be very brief here.

## 2. "*Normal working day.*"

In no other country has the workers' party limited itself to such an indefinite demand, but has always fixed the length of the working day that it considers normal under the given circumstances.

3. "Restriction of female labour and prohibition of child labour."

The standardisation of the working day must include the restriction of female labour, in so far as it relates to the duration, intermissions, etc., of the working day: otherwise it could only mean the exclusion of female labour from branches of industry that are especially unhealthy for the female body or are objectionable morally for the female sex. If that is what was meant, it should have been said so.

*"Prohibition of child labour."* Here it was absolutely essential to state the *age limit*.

A *general prohibition* of child labour is incompatible with the existence of large-scale industry and hence an empty, pious wish. Its realisation – if it were possible – would be reactionary, since, with a strict regulation of the working time according to the different age groups and other safety measures for the protection of children, an early combination of productive labour with education is one of the most potent means for the transformation of present-day society.

4. "State supervision of factory, workshop and domestic industry."

In consideration of the Prusso-German state it should definitely have been demanded that the inspectors are to be removable only by a court of law; that any worker can have them prosecuted for neglect of duty; that they must belong to the medical profession.

5. "Regulation of prison labour."

A petty demand in a general workers' programme. In any case, it should have been clearly stated that there is no intention from fear of competition to allow ordinary criminals to be treated like beasts, and especially that there is no desire to deprive them of their sole means of betterment, productive labour. This was surely the least one might have expected from Socialists.

6. "An effective liability law."

It should have been stated what is meant by an "effective" liability law.

Be it noted, incidentally, that in speaking of the normal working day the part of factory legislation that deals with health regulations and safety measures, etc., has been overlooked. The liability law only comes into operation when these regulations are infringed.

In short, this appendix also is distinguished by slovenly editing.

*Dixi et salvavi animam meam.*<sup>a</sup>

Written in April or early  
May 1875

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 3, 1970, pp. 11-30

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<sup>a</sup> I have spoken and saved my soul.—*Ed.*

## Frederick Engels

### From *The Workingmen of Europe in 1877*

In Belgium, too, the centre of gravity of working class action has been shifted, and this action itself has undergone an important change in consequence. Up to 1875, this centre lay in the French-speaking part of the country, including Brussels, which is half French and half Flemish; the movement was, during this period, strongly influenced by Proudhonist doctrines, which also enjoin abstention from political interference, especially from elections. There remained, then, nothing but strikes, generally repressed by bloody intervention of the military, and meetings in which the old stock phrases were constantly repeated. The work-people got sick of this and the whole movement gradually fell asleep. But since 1875, the manufacturing towns of the Flemish speaking portion entered into the struggle with a greater and as was soon to be proved, a new spirit. In Belgium there are no factory laws whatever to limit the hours of labour of women or children; and the first cry of the factory voters of Ghent and neighbourhood was for protection of their wives and children, who were made to slave fifteen and more hours a day in the Cotton Mills. The opposition of the Proudhonist doctrinaires who considered such trifles as far beneath the attention of men occupied with transcendent revolutionism, was of no avail, and was gradually overcome. The demand of legal protection for factory-children became one of the points of the Belgian working-class platform, and with it, was broken the spell which hitherto tabooed political action. The example of the Germans did the rest and now the Belgian workmen, like those of Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Portugal, Hungary, Austria, and part of Italy, are forming themselves into a political party, distinct from, and opposed to, all other political parties, and aiming at the conquest of their emancipation by whatever political action the situation may require.

Written in mid-February-mid-March,  
1878

Printed according to the original



## Frederick Engels

### From *The Exceptional Law Against Socialists in Germany*

*London, 21 March*

The last socialist election in Germany proved that socialism cannot be killed by being muzzled. Instead, the Anti-Socialist Law<sup>74</sup> will have an excellent outcome for us. It will complete the revolutionary education of the German workers....

With great efforts and great sacrifices they achieved the degree of freedom of the press, association, and assembly that they enjoyed; it was a continuous struggle, but victory always rested in the end with the workers. They could organise, and every time a general election was held it was a new triumph for them.

This legal agitation, however, led to some believing that nothing more was needed for final victory of the proletariat. In a country as poor in revolutionary traditions as Germany, that could become dangerous. Fortunately, Bismarck's brutal action, and the cowardice of the German bourgeoisie who supported it, altered things. The German workers had tested how much constitutional liberties were worth, when the proletariat was bold enough to take them seriously and make use of them to fight capitalist domination. If there were still any illusions on this score, friend Bismarck has brusquely dissipated them. I say *friend* Bismarck because no one has rendered such services to socialism in Germany as he. After having prepared the revolution through the most advanced and most insupportable militarism, ever mounting taxes, the alliance of the state with the most shameless stock exchange speculation, the return to the most feudal and police traditions of old Prussia, persecutions as frequent as they are petty,

and the degradation and public humiliation imposed on the middle class (which, besides, did not deserve better treatment), and after having, in short, thus prepared the revolution, he crowned his work by forcing the German proletariat to take the revolutionary road.

Written on March 21, 1879

Translated from the Italian

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## Frederick Engels

### *A Fair Day's Wages for a Fair Day's Work*

This has now been the motto of the English working-class movement for the last fifty years. It did good service in the time of the rising Trades Unions after the repeal of the infamous Combination Laws in 1824<sup>75</sup>; it did still better service in the time of the glorious Chartist movement, when the English workmen marched at the head of the European working class. But times are moving on, and a good many things which were desirable and necessary fifty, and even thirty years ago, are now antiquated and would be completely out of place. Does the old, time-honoured watchword too belong to them?

A fair day's wages for a fair day's work? But what is a fair day's wages, and what is a fair day's work? How are they determined by the laws under which modern society exists and develops itself? For an answer to this we must not apply to the science of morals or of law and equity, nor to any sentimental feeling of humanity, justice, or even charity. What is morally fair, what is even fair in law, may be far from being socially fair. Social fairness or unfairness is decided by one science alone—the science which deals with the material facts of production and exchange, the science of political economy.

Now what does political economy call a fair day's wages and a fair day's work? Simply the rate of wages and the length and intensity of a day's work which are determined by

competition of employer and employed in the open market. And what are they, when thus determined?

A fair day's wages, under normal conditions, is the sum required to procure to the labourer the means of existence necessary, according to the standard of life of his station and country, to keep himself in working order and to propagate his race. The actual rate of wages, with the fluctuations of trade, may be sometimes above, sometimes below this rate; but, under fair conditions, that rate ought to be the average of all oscillations.

A fair day's work is that length of working day and that intensity of actual work which expends one day's full working power of the workman without encroaching upon his capacity for the same amount of work for the next and following days.

The transaction, then, may be thus described—the workman gives to the Capitalist his full day's working power; that is, so much of it as he can give without rendering impossible the continuous repetition of the transaction. In exchange he receives just as much, and no more, of the necessities of life as is required to keep up the repetition of the same bargain every day. The workman gives as much, the Capitalist gives as little, as the nature of the bargain will admit. This is a very peculiar sort of fairness.

But let us look a little deeper into the matter. As, according to political economists, wages and working days are fixed by competition, fairness seems to require that both sides should have the same fair start on equal terms. But that is not the case. The Capitalist, if he cannot agree with the Labourer, can afford to wait, and live upon his capital. The workman cannot. He has but wages to live upon, and must therefore take work when, where, and at what terms he can get it. The workman has no fair start. He is fearfully handicapped by hunger. Yet, according to the political economy of the Capitalist class, that is the very pink of fairness.

But this is a mere trifle. The application of mechanical power and machinery to new trades, and the extension and improvements of machinery in trades already subjected to it, keep turning out of work more and more "hands"; and they

do so at a far quicker rate than that at which these superseded "hands" can be absorbed by, and find employment in, the manufactures of the country. These superseded "hands" form a real industrial army of reserve for the use of Capital. If trade is bad they may starve, beg, steal, or go to the work-house; if trade is good they are ready at hand to expand production; and until the very last man, woman, or child of this army of reserve shall have found work—which happens in times of frantic over-production alone—until then will its competition keep down wages, and by its existence alone strengthen the power of Capital in its struggle with Labour. In the race with Capital, Labour is not only handicapped, it has to drag a cannon-ball riveted to its foot. Yet that is fair according to Capitalist political economy.

But let us inquire out of what fund does Capital pay these very fair wages? Out of capital, of course. But capital produces no value. Labour is, besides the earth, the only source of wealth; capital itself is nothing but the stored-up produce of labour. So that the wages of Labour are paid out of labour, and the working man is paid out of his own produce. According to what we may call common fairness, the wages of the labourer ought to consist in the produce of his labour. But that would not be fair according to political economy. On the contrary, the produce of the workman's labour goes to the capitalist, and the workman gets out of it no more than the bare necessities of life. And thus the end of this uncommonly "fair" race of competition is that the produce of the labour of those who do work, gets unavoidably accumulated in the hands of those that do not work, and becomes in their hands the most powerful means to enslave the very men who produced it.

A fair day's wages for a fair day's work! A good deal might be said about the fair day's work too, the fairness of which is perfectly on a par with that of the wages. But that we must leave for another occasion. From what has been stated it is pretty clear that the old watchword has lived its day, and will hardly hold water nowadays. The fairness of political economy, such as it truly lays down the laws which rule

actual society, that fairness is all on one side—on that of Capital. Let, then, the old motto be buried for ever and replaced by another:

**POSSESSION OF THE MEANS OF WORK—RAW MATERIAL, FACTORIES, MACHINERY—BY THE WORKING PEOPLE THEMSELVES.**

Written on May 1-2, 1881

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F. Engels, *The Wages System*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, pp. 7-9

## Frederick Engels

### *The Wages System*

In a previous article we examined the time-honoured motto, "A fair day's wages for a fair day's work", and came to the conclusion that the fairest day's wages under present social conditions is necessarily tantamount to the very unfair-est division of the workman's produce, the greater portion of that produce going into the capitalist's pocket, and the workman having to put up with just as much as will enable him to keep himself in working order and to propagate his race.

This is a law of political economy, or, in other words, a law of the present economical organisation of society, which is more powerful than all the Common and Statute Law of England put together, the Court of Chancery included.<sup>76</sup> While society is divided into two opposing classes—on the one hand, the capitalists, monopolisers of the whole of the means of production, land, raw materials, machinery; on the other hand, labourers, working people deprived of all property in the means of production, owners of nothing but their own working power; while this social organisation exists the law of wages will remain all-powerful, and will every day afresh rivet the chains by which the working man is made the slave of his own produce—monopolised by the capitalist.

The Trades Unions of this country have now for nearly sixty years fought against this law—with what result? Have they succeeded in freeing the working class from the bondage in which capital—the produce of its own hands—holds it? Have they enabled a single section of the working class to rise above the situation of wages-slaves, to become owners of their

own means of production, of the raw materials, tools, machinery required in their trade, and thus to become the owners of the produce of their own labour? It is well known that not only they have not done so, but that they never tried.

Far be it from us to say that Trades Unions are of no use because they have not done that. On the contrary, Trades Unions in England, as well as in every other manufacturing country, are a necessity for the working classes in their struggle against capital. The average rate of wages is equal to the sum of necessities sufficient to keep up the race of workmen in a certain country according to the standard of life habitual in that country. That standard of life may be very different for different classes of workmen. The great merit of Trades Unions, in their struggle to keep up the rate of wages and to reduce working hours, is that they tend to keep up and to raise the standard of life. There are many trades in the East-end of London whose labour is not more skilled and quite as hard as that of bricklayers and bricklayers labourers, yet they hardly earn half the wages of these. Why? Simply because a powerful organisation enables the one set to maintain a comparatively high standard of life as the rule by which their wages are measured; while the other set, disorganised and powerless, have to submit not only to unavoidable but also to arbitrary encroachments of their employers: their standard of life is gradually reduced, they learn how to live on less and less wages, and their wages naturally fall to that level which they themselves have learnt to accept as sufficient.

The law of wages, then, is not one which draws a hard and fast line. It is not inexorable with certain limits. There is at every time (great depression excepted) for every trade a certain latitude within which the rate of wages may be modified by the results of the struggle between the two contending parties. Wages in every case are fixed by a bargain, and in a bargain he who resists longest and best has the greatest chance of getting more than his due. If the isolated workman tries to drive his bargain with the capitalist he is easily beaten and has to surrender at discretion; but if a whole trade of



workmen form a powerful organisation, collect among themselves a fund to enable them to defy their employers if need be, and thus become enabled to treat with these employers as a power, then, and then only, have they a chance to get even that pittance which according to the economical constitution of present society, may be called a fair day's wages for a fair day's work.

The law of wages is not upset by the struggles of Trades Unions. On the contrary, it is enforced by them. Without the means of resistance of the Trades Unions the labourer does not receive even what is his due according to the rules of the wages system. It is only with the fear of the Trades Union before his eyes that the capitalist can be made to part with the full market value of his labourer's working power. Do you want a proof? Look at the wages paid to the members of the large Trades Unions, and at the wages paid to the numberless small trades in that pool of stagnant misery, the East-end of London.

Thus the Trades Unions do not attack the wages system. But it is not the highness or lowness of wages which constitutes the economical degradation of the working class: this degradation is comprised in the fact that, instead of receiving for its labour the full produce of this labour, the working class has to be satisfied with a portion of its own produce called wages. The capitalist pockets the whole produce (paying the labourer out of it) because he is the owner of the means of labour. And, therefore, there is no real redemption for the working class until it becomes owner of all the means of work—land, raw material, machinery, etc.—and thereby also the owner of THE WHOLE OF THE PRODUCE OF ITS OWN LABOUR.

Written on May 15-16,  
1881

F. Engels, *The Wages System*, pp. 10-12

## Frederick Engels

### *Trades Unions*

#### I

In our last issue we considered the action of Trades Unions as far as they enforced the economical law of wages against employers. We return to this subject, as it is of the highest importance that the working classes generally should thoroughly understand it.

We suppose no English working man of the present day needs to be taught that it is the interest of the individual capitalist as well as of the capitalist class generally, to reduce wages as much as possible. The produce of labour, after deducting all expenses, is divided, as David Ricardo had irrefutably proved, into two shares: the one forms the labourer's wages, the other the capitalist's profits. Now, this net produce of labour being, in every individual case, a given quantity, it is clear that the share called profits cannot increase without the share called wages decreasing. To deny that it is the interest of the capitalist to reduce wages, would be tantamount to say that it is not his interest to increase his profits.

We know very well that there are other means of temporarily increasing profits, but they do not alter the general law, and therefore need not trouble us here.

Now, how can the capitalists reduce wages when the rate of wages is governed by a distinct and well-defined law of social economy? The economical law of wages is there, and is irrefutable. But as we have seen, it is elastic, and it is so in two ways. The rate of wages can be lowered, in a particular trade, either directly, by gradually accustoming the workpeople of that trade to a lower standard of life, or, indirectly, by increasing the number of working hours per day (or the inten-

sity of work during the same working hours) without increasing the pay.

And the interest of every individual capitalist to increase his profits by reducing the wages of his workpeople receives a fresh stimulus from the competition of capitalists of the same trade amongst each other. Each one of them tries to undersell his competitors, and unless he is to sacrifice his profits he must try and reduce wages. Thus, the pressure upon the rate of wages brought about by the interest of every individual capitalist is increased tenfold by the competition amongst them. What was before a matter of more or less profit, now becomes a matter of necessity.

Against this constant, unceasing pressure unorganised labour has no effective means of resistance. Therefore, in trades without organisation of the workpeople, wages tend constantly to fall and the working hours tend constantly to increase. Slowly, but surely, this process goes on. Times of prosperity may now and then interrupt it, but times of bad trade hasten it on all the more afterwards. The workpeople gradually get accustomed to a lower and lower standard of life. While the length of working day more and more approaches the possible maximum, the wages come nearer and nearer to their absolute minimum – the sum below which it becomes absolutely impossible for the workman to live and to reproduce his race.

There was a temporary exception to this about the beginning of this century. The rapid extension of steam and machinery was not sufficient for the still faster increasing demand for their produce. Wages in these trades, except those of children sold from the workhouse to the manufacturer, were as a rule high; those of such skilled manual labour as could not be done without were very high; what a dyer, a mechanic, a velvet-cutter, a hand-mule spinner, used to receive now sounds fabulous. At the same time the trades superseded by machinery were slowly starved to death. But newly-invented machinery by-and-by superseded these well-paid workmen; machinery was invented which made machinery, and that at such a rate that the supply of machine-made goods not only equalled, but exceeded, the

demand. When the general peace, in 1815, re-established regularity of trade, the decennial fluctuations between prosperity, overproduction, and commercial panic began. Whatever advantages the workpeople had preserved from old prosperous times, and perhaps even increased during the period of frantic over-production, were now taken from them during the period of bad trade and panic; and soon the manufacturing population of England submitted to the general law that the wages of unorganised labour constantly tend towards the absolute minimum.

But in the meantime the Trades Unions, legalised in 1824, had also stepped in, and high time it was. Capitalists are always organised. They need in most cases no formal union, no rules, officers, etc. Their small number, as compared with that of the workmen, the fact of their forming a separate class, their constant social and commercial intercourse stand them in lieu of that; it is only later on, when a branch of manufacturers has taken possession of a district, such as the cotton trade has of Lancashire, that a formal capitalists' Trades Union becomes necessary. On the other hand, the workpeople from the very beginning cannot do without a strong organisation, well-defined by rules and delegating its authority to officers and committees. The Act of 1824 rendered these organisations legal. From that day Labour became a power in England. The formerly helpless mass, divided against itself, was no longer so. To the strength given by union and common action soon was added the force of a well-filled exchequer—"resistance money", as our French brethren expressively call it. The entire position of things now changed. For the capitalist it became a risky thing to indulge in a reduction of wages or an increase of working hours.

Hence the violent outbursts of the capitalist class of those times against Trades Unions. That class had always considered its long-established practice of grinding down the working class as a vested right and lawful privilege. That was now to be put a stop to. No wonder they cried out lustily and held themselves at least as much injured in their rights and property as Irish landlords do nowadays.<sup>77</sup>

Sixty years' experience of struggle have brought them round to some extent. Trades Unions have now become acknowledged institutions, and their action as one of the regulators of wages is recognised quite as much as the action of the Factories and Workshops Acts as regulators of the hours of work. Nay, the cotton masters in Lancashire have lately even taken a leaf out of the workpeople's book, and now know how to organise a strike, when it suits them, as well or better than any Trades Union.

Thus it is through the action of Trades Unions that the law of wages is enforced as against the employers, and that the workpeople of any well-organised trade are enabled to obtain, at least approximately, the full value of the working power which they hire to their employer; and that, with the help of State laws, the hours of labour are made at least not to exceed too much that maximum length beyond which the working power is prematurely exhausted. This, however, is the utmost Trades Unions, as at present organised, can hope to obtain, and that by constant struggle only, by an immense waste of strength and money; and then the fluctuations of trade, once every ten years at least, break down for the moment what has been conquered, and the fight has to be fought over again. It is a vicious circle from which there is no issue. The working class remains what it was, and what our Chartist forefathers were not afraid to call it, a class of wages slaves. Is this to be the final result of all this labour, self-sacrifice, and suffering? Is this to remain for ever the highest aim of British workmen? Or is the working class of this country at last to attempt breaking through this vicious circle, and to find an issue out of it in a movement for the **ABOLITION OF THE WAGES SYSTEM ALTOGETHER?**

Next week we shall examine the part played by Trades Unions as organisers of the working class.

## II

So far we have considered the functions of Trades Unions as far only as they contribute to the regulation of the rate of

wages and ensure to the labourer, in his struggle against capital, at least some means of resistance. But that aspect does not exhaust our subject.

The struggle of the labourer against capital, we said. That struggle does exist, whatever the apologists of capital may say to the contrary. It will exist so long as a reduction of wages remains the safest and readiest means of raising profits; nay, so long as the wages system itself shall exist. The very existence of Trades Unions is proof sufficient of the fact; if they are not made to fight against the encroachments of capital what are they made for? There is no use in mincing matters. No milksop words can hide the ugly fact that present society is mainly divided into two great antagonistic classes—into capitalists, the owners of all the means for the employment of labour, on one side; and working men, the owners of nothing but their own working power, on the other. The produce of the labour of the latter class has to be divided between both classes, and it is this division about which the struggle is constantly going on. Each class tries to get as large a share as possible; and it is the most curious aspect of this struggle that the working class, while fighting to obtain a share only of its own produce, is often enough accused of actually robbing the capitalist!

But a struggle between two great classes of society necessarily becomes a political struggle. So did the long battle between the middle or capitalist class and the landed aristocracy; so also does the fight between the working class and these same capitalists. In every struggle of class against class, the next end fought for is political power; the ruling class defends its political supremacy, that is to say its safe majority in the Legislature; the inferior class fights for, first a share, then the whole of that power, in order to become enabled to change existing laws in conformity with their own interests and requirements. Thus the working class of Great Britain for years fought ardently and even violently for the People's Charter, which was to give it that political power; it was defeated, but the struggle had made such an impression upon the victorious middle class that this class, since then, was only

too glad to buy a prolonged armistice at the price of ever-repeated concessions to the working people.

Now, in a political struggle of class against class, organisation is the most important weapon. And in the same measure as the merely political or Chartist Organisation fell to pieces, in the same measure the Trades Unions Organisation grew stronger and stronger, until at present it has reached a degree of strength unequalled by any working-class organisation abroad. A few large Trades Unions, comprising between one and two million of working men, and backed by the smaller or local Unions, represent a power which has to be taken into account by any Government of the ruling class, be it Whig or Tory.

According to the traditions of their origin and development in this country, these powerful organisations have hitherto limited themselves almost strictly to their function of sharing in the regulation of wages and working hours, and of enforcing the repeal of laws openly hostile to the workmen. As stated before, they have done so with quite as much effect as they had a right to expect. But they have attained more than that—the ruling class, which knows their strength better than they themselves do, has volunteered to them concessions beyond that. Disraeli's Household Suffrage<sup>78</sup> gave the vote to at least the greater portion of the organised working class. Would he have proposed it unless he supposed that these new voters would show a will of their own—would cease to be led by middle-class liberal politicians? Would he have been able to carry it if the working people, in the management of their colossal Trade Societies, had not proved themselves fit for administrative and political work?

That very measure opened out a new prospect to the working class. It gave them the majority in London and in all manufacturing towns, and thus enabled them to enter into the struggle against capital with new weapons, by sending men of their own class to Parliament. And here, we are sorry to say, the Trades Unions forgot their duty as the advanced guard of the working class. The new weapon has been in their hands for more than ten years, but they scarcely ever unsheathed it. They ought not to forget that they cannot continue to hold

the position they now occupy unless they really march in the van of the working class. It is not in the nature of things that the working class of England should possess the power of sending forty or fifty working men to Parliament and yet be satisfied for ever to be represented by capitalists or their clerks, such as lawyers, editors, etc.

More than this, there are plenty of symptoms that the working class of this country is awakening to the consciousness that it has for some time been moving in the wrong groove; that the present movements for higher wages and shorter hours exclusively, keep it in a vicious circle out of which there is no issue; that it is not the lowness of wages which forms the fundamental evil, but the wages system itself. This knowledge once generally spread amongst the working class, the position of Trades Unions must change considerably. They will no longer enjoy the privilege of being the only organisations of the working class. At the side of, or above, the Unions of special trades there must spring up a general Union, a political organisation of the working class as a whole.

Thus there are two points which the organised Trades would do well to consider, firstly, that the time is rapidly approaching when the working class of this country will claim, with a voice not to be mistaken, its full share of representation in Parliament. Secondly, that the time also is rapidly approaching when the working class will have understood that the struggle for high wages and short hours, and the whole action of Trades Unions as now carried on, is not an end in itself, but a means, a very necessary and effective means, but only one of several means towards a higher end: the abolition of the wages system altogether.

For the full representation of labour in Parliament as well as for the preparation of the abolition of the wages system, organisations will become necessary, not of separate Trades, but of the working class as a body. And the sooner this is done the better. There is no power in the world which could for a day resist the British working class organised as a body.



## Frederick Engels

### *From England in 1845 and in 1885*

For England, the effects of this domination of the manufacturing capitalists were at first starting. Trade revived and extended to a degree unheard-of even in this cradle of modern industry; the previous astounding creations of steam and machinery dwindled into nothing compared with the immense mass of productions of the twenty years from 1850 to 1870, with the overwhelming figures of exports and imports, of wealth accumulated in the hands of capitalists and of human working power concentrated in the large towns. The progress was indeed interrupted, as before, by a crisis every ten years, in 1857 as well as in 1866; but these revulsions were now considered as natural, inevitable events, which must be fatalistically submitted to, and which always set themselves right in the end.

And the condition of the working class during this period? There was temporary improvement even for the great mass. But this improvement always was reduced to the old level by the influx of the great body of the unemployed reserve, by the constant superseding of hands by new machinery, by the immigration of the agricultural population, now, too, more and more superseded by machines.

A permanent improvement can be recognised for two "protected" sections only of the working class. Firstly, the factory hands. The fixing by Act of Parliament of their working day within relatively rational limits, has restored their physical constitution and endowed them with a moral superiority, enhanced by their local concentration. They are undoubtedly

better off than before 1848. The best proof is that out of ten strikes they make, nine are provoked by the manufacturers in their own interests, as the only means of securing a reduced production. You can never get the masters to agree to work "short time", let manufactured goods be ever so unsaleable; but get the workpeople to strike, and the masters shut their factories to a man.

Secondly, the great Trades Unions. They are the organisations of those trades in which the labour of *grown-up men* predominates, or is alone applicable. Here the competition neither of women and children nor of machinery has so far weakened their organised strength. The engineers, the carpenters and joiners, the bricklayers are each of them a power, to that extent that, as in the case of the bricklayers and bricklayers' labourers, they can even successfully resist the introduction of machinery. That their condition has remarkably improved since 1848 there can be no doubt, and the best proof of this is in the fact that for more than fifteen years not only have their employers been with them, but they with their employers, upon exceedingly good terms. They form an aristocracy among the working class; they have succeeded in enforcing for themselves a relatively comfortable position, and they accept it as final. They are the model working men of Messrs. Leone Levi and Giffen, and they are very nice people indeed nowadays to deal with, for any sensible capitalist in particular and for the whole capitalist class in general.

But as to the great mass of the working people, the state of misery and insecurity in which they live now is as low as ever, if not lower. The East End of London<sup>79</sup> is an ever spreading pool of stagnant misery and desolation, of starvation when out of work, and degradation, physical and moral, when in work. And so in all other large towns—abstraction made of the privileged minority of the workers; and so in the smaller towns and in the agricultural districts. The law which reduces the *value* of labour-power to the value of the necessary means of subsistence, and the other law which reduces its *average price* as a rule to the minimum of those means of subsistence: these laws act upon them with the irresistible force of an

automatic engine, which crushes them between its wheels.

This, then, was the position created by the Free Trade Policy of 1847, and by twenty years of the rule of the manufacturing capitalists. But then a change came. The crash of 1866 was, indeed, followed by a slight and short revival about 1873; but that did not last. We did not, indeed, pass through the full crisis at the time it was due, in 1877 or 1878; but we have had, ever since 1876, a chronic state of stagnation in all dominant branches of industry. Neither will the full crash come; nor will the period of longed-for prosperity, to which we used to be entitled before and after it. A dull depression, a chronic glut of all markets for all trades, that is what we have been living in for nearly ten years. How is this?

The Free Trade theory was based upon one assumption: that England was to be the one great manufacturing centre of an agricultural world. And the actual fact is that this assumption has turned out to be a pure delusion. The conditions of modern industry, steam-power and machinery, can be established wherever there is fuel, especially coals. And other countries beside England, France, Belgium, Germany, America, even Russia, have coals. And the people over there did not see the advantage of being turned into Irish pauper farmers merely for the greater wealth and glory of English capitalists. They set resolutely about manufacturing, not only for themselves but for the rest of the world; and the consequence is, that the manufacturing monopoly enjoyed by England for nearly a century is irretrievably broken up.

But the manufacturing monopoly of England is the pivot of the present social system of England. Even while that monopoly lasted the markets could not keep pace with the increasing productivity of English manufacturers; the decennial crises were the consequence. And new markets are getting scarce every day, so much so that even the negroes of the Congo are now to be forced into the civilisation attendant upon Manchester calicoes, Staffordshire pottery, and Birmingham hardware. How will it be when Continental, and especially American goods, flow in the ever increasing quantities—when the predominating share, still held by British manufac-

tures, will become reduced from year to year? Answer, Free Trade, thou universal panacea?

I am not the first to point this out. Already in 1883, at the Southport meeting of the British Association, Mr. Inglis Palgrave, the President of the Economical section, stated plainly that

“the days of great trade profits in England were over, and there was a pause in the progress of several great branches of industrial labour. *The country might almost be said to be entering the non-progressive state.*”

But what is to be the consequence? Capitalist production *cannot* stop. It must go on increasing and expanding, or it must die. Even now, the mere reduction of England's lion's share in the supply of the world's markets means stagnation, distress, excess of capital here, excess of unemployed workpeople there. What will it be when the increase of yearly production is brought to a complete stop?

Here is the vulnerable place, the heel of Achilles, for capitalist production. Its very basis is the necessity of constant expansion, and this constant expansion now becomes impossible. It ends in a deadlock. Every year England is brought nearer face to face with the question: either the country must go to pieces, or capitalist production must. Which is it to be?

And the working class? If even under the unparalleled commercial and industrial expansion, from 1848 to 1868, they have had to undergo such misery; if even then the great bulk of them experienced at best a temporary improvement of their condition, while only a small, privileged, “protected” minority was permanently benefited, what will it be when this dazzling period is brought finally to a close; when the present dreary stagnation shall not only become intensified, but this its intensified condition shall become the permanent and normal state of English trade?

The truth is this: during the period of England's industrial monopoly the English working class have to a certain extent shared in the benefits of the monopoly. These benefits were very unequally parcelled out amongst them; the privileged minority pocketed most, but even the great mass had at least

a temporary share now and then. And that is the reason why since the dying-out of Owenism there has been no Socialism in England. With the breakdown of that monopoly the English working class will lose that privileged position; it will find itself generally—the privileged and leading minority not excepted—on a level with its fellow-workers abroad. And that is the reason why there will be Socialism again in England.

Written in mid-February  
1885

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Articles on Britain*,  
pp. 391-94

## Frederick Engels

### From *Preface to the Second Edition* of "*The Housing Question*"

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During this revision it was borne in on me what gigantic progress the international working-class movement has made during the past fourteen years. At that time it was still a fact that "for twenty years the workers speaking Romance languages have had no other mental pabulum than the works of Proudhon", and, in a pinch, the still more one-sided version of Proudhonism presented by the father of "anarchism", Bakunin, who regarded Proudhon as "the schoolmaster of us all", *notre maître à nous tous*. Although the Proudhonists in France were only a small sect among the workers, they were still the only ones who had a definitely formulated programme and who were able in the Commune to take over the leadership in the economic field. In Belgium, Proudhonism reigned unchallenged among the Walloon workers, and in Spain and Italy, with a few isolated exceptions, everything in the working-class movement which was not anarchist was decidedly Proudhonist. And today? In France, Proudhon has been completely disposed of among the workers and retains supporters only among the radical bourgeois and petty bourgeois, who as Proudhonists also call themselves "Socialists", but against whom the most energetic fight is carried on by the socialist workers. In Belgium, the Flemings have ousted the Walloons from the leadership of the movement, deposed Proudhonism and greatly raised the level of the movement. In Spain, as in Italy, the anarchist high tide of the seventies has receded and swept away with it the remnants of Proudhonism. While in Italy the new party is still in process of clarification and for-

mation, in Spain the small nucleus, which as the *Nueva Federación Madrileña* remained loyal to the General Council of the International, has developed into a strong party,<sup>80</sup> which—as can be seen from the republican press itself—is destroying the influence of the bourgeois republicans on the workers far more effectively than its noisy anarchist predecessors were ever able to do. Among Latin workers the forgotten works of Proudhon have been replaced by *Capital*, the *Communist Manifesto* and a number of other works of the Marxist school, and the main demand of Marx—the seizure of all the means of production in the name of society by a proletariat risen to sole political power—is now the demand of the whole revolutionary working class in the Latin countries also.

If therefore Proudhonism has been finally supplanted among the workers of the Latin countries also, if it—in accordance with its real destination—only serves French, Spanish, Italian and Belgian bourgeois radicals as an expression of their bourgeois and petty-bourgeois desires, why revert to it today? Why combat anew a dead opponent by reprinting these articles?

First of all, because these articles do not confine themselves to a mere polemic against Proudhon and his German representative. As a consequence of the division of labour that existed between Marx and myself, it fell to me to present our opinions in the periodical press, and, therefore, particularly in the fight against opposing views, in order that Marx should have time for the elaboration of his great basic work. This made it necessary for me to present our views for the most part in a polemical form, in opposition to other kinds of views. So also here. Parts One and Three contain not only a criticism of the Proudhonist conception of the question, but also a presentation of our own conception.

Secondly, Proudhon played much too significant a role in the history of the European working-class movement for him to fall into oblivion without more ado. Refuted theoretically and discarded practically, he still retains his historical interest. Whoever occupies himself in any detail with modern socialism must also acquaint himself with the “surmounted stand-

points" of the movement. Marx's *Poverty of Philosophy*<sup>a</sup> appeared several years before Proudhon put forward his practical proposals for social reform. Here Marx could only discover in embryo and criticise Proudhon's exchange bank. From this angle, therefore, this work of mine supplements, unfortunately imperfectly enough, Marx's work. Marx would have accomplished all this much better and more convincingly.

And finally, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois socialism is strongly represented in Germany down to this very hour. On the one hand, by Katheder-Socialists and philanthropists of all sorts, with whom the wish to turn the workers into owners of their dwellings still plays a great role and against whom, therefore, my work is still appropriate. On the other hand, a certain petty-bourgeois socialism finds representation in the Social-Democratic Party itself, and even in the ranks of the Reichstag group. This is done in the following way: while the fundamental views of modern socialism and the demand for the transformation of all the means of production into social property are recognised as justified, the realisation of this is declared possible only in the distant future, a future which for all practical purposes is quite out of sight. Thus, for the present one has to have recourse to mere social patchwork, and sympathy can be shown, according to circumstances, even with the most reactionary efforts for so-called "uplifting of the labouring class". The existence of such a tendency is quite inevitable in Germany, the land of philistinism *par excellence*, particularly at a time when industrial development is violently and on a mass scale uprooting this old and deeply-rooted philistinism. The tendency is quite harmless to the movement, in view of the wonderful common sense of our workers, which has been demonstrated so magnificently precisely during the last eight years of the struggle against the Anti-Socialist Law, the police and the courts. But it is neces-

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<sup>a</sup> K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 105-212; see also present edition, pp. 26-29.—*Ed.*



sary clearly to realise that such a tendency exists. And if later on this tendency takes on a firmer shape and more clearly defined contours, as is necessary and even desirable, it will have to go back to its predecessors for the formulation of its programme, and in doing so it will hardly be able to avoid Proudhon.

Written on January 10,  
1887

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 296-98

## Frederick Engels

### *May 4 in London*<sup>81</sup>

The May Day celebration of the proletariat was epoch-making not only in its universal character, which made it the first international *action* of the militant working class. It also served to register most gratifying advances in the various countries. Friend and foe agree that *on the whole Continent it was Austria, and in Austria it was Vienna, that celebrated the holiday of the proletariat in the most brilliant and dignified manner*, and that the Austrian, above all the Viennese, workers thereby won themselves an entirely different standing in the movement. Only a few years ago the Austrian movement had declined almost to zero, and the workers of the German and Slav crown territories were split into hostile parties wasting their forces on internecine strife. Whoever had affirmed, a mere three years ago, that on May 1, 1890, Vienna and the whole of Austria would set an example for all others of how a proletarian class holiday should be celebrated, would have been laughed at. We shall do well not to forget this fact when judging those squabbles stemming from internal discord in which the workers of other countries are wearing away their forces even today, as, for instance, in France. Who will assert that Paris cannot do what Vienna has done?

But on May 4 Vienna was thrown into the shade by London. And I hold it to be the most important and magnificent in the entire May Day celebration that on May 4, 1890, the *English proletariat*, rousing itself from forty years of slumber, *rejoined the movement of its class*. To appreciate this, one must look into the events leading up to May 4.

Towards the beginning of last year the world's largest and most wretched working-class district, the East End of London, stirred gradually to action. On April 1, 1889, the Gas Workers' and General Labourers' Union was founded; today it has a membership of some 100,000. Largely with the co-operation of this partner union (many are gas workers in winter and dock workers in summer), the dockers' big strike started on its way and shook even the bottommost section of the East London workers out of stagnation.<sup>82</sup> As a result, trade union upon trade union began to form among these, mostly unskilled workers, while those already in existence there, which till then had barely kept themselves going, now blossomed forth quickly. But the difference between these new trade unions and the old was very great. The old ones, which admit none but "skilled" workers, are exclusive; they bar all workers who have not been trained according to the statutes of the guild concerned, and thereby even expose themselves to competition from those not in the guild; they are rich, but the richer they become, the more they degenerate into mere sick-funds and burial clubs; they are conservative and they steer clear above all of that "..." socialism, as far and as long as they can. The new "unskilled" unions, on the other hand, admit *every* fellow-worker; they are essentially, and the gas workers even exclusively, strike unions and strike funds. And while they are not yet socialists to a man, they insist nevertheless on being led only by socialists. But socialist propaganda had already been going on for years in East End, where it was above all Mrs. E. Marx-Aveling and her husband, Edward Aveling, who had four years earlier discovered the best propaganda field in the "Radical clubs"<sup>83</sup> consisting almost exclusively of workers and had worked on them steadily and, as is evident now, with the best of success. During the dock workers' strike Mrs. Aveling was one of the three women in charge of the distribution of relief, and this earned them a slanderous statement from Mr. Hyndman, the runaway of Trafalgar Square,<sup>84</sup> who alleged that they had had a weekly three pounds sterling paid to them for it from the strike fund. Mrs. Aveling led almost unaided last winter's

strike in Silvertown,<sup>85</sup> also in East End, and on the gas workers' committee she represents a women's section she has founded there.

Last autumn the gas workers won an eight-hour working day here in London, but lost it again, after an unhappy strike,<sup>86</sup> in the southern part of the city, acquiring sufficient proof that this gain is by no means safe in the northern part either. Is it surprising, then, that they readily accepted Mrs. Aveling's proposal to hold the May Day celebration, decided on by the Paris Congress, in favour of a legalised eight-hour working day in London? In common with several socialist groups, the Radical clubs and the other trade unions in East End, they set up a Central Committee that was to organise a large demonstration for the purpose in Hyde Park. As it turned out that all attempts to hold the demonstration on Thursday, May 1, were bound to fail this year, it was decided to put it off till Sunday, May 4.

To ensure that, as far as possible, *all* London workers took part, the Central Committee invited, with uninhibited naïveté, the London Trades Council as well. This is a body made up of delegates from the London trades unions, mostly from the older corporations of "skilled" workers, a body in which, as might be expected, the anti-socialist elements still command a majority. The Trades Council saw that the movement for an eight-hour day threatened to grow over its head. The old trades unions stand likewise for an eight-hour working day, but not for one to be established by law. By an eight-hour day they mean that normal daily wages should be paid for eight-hours—so-and-so much per hour—but that overtime should be allowed any number of hours daily, provided every overtime hour is paid at a higher rate—say, at the rate of one and a half or two ordinary hours. The point therefore was to channel the demonstration into the fairway of this kind of working day, to be won by "free" agreement but certainly not to be made obligatory by parliamentary act. To this end the Trades Council allied itself with the Social-Democratic Federation of the above-mentioned Mr. Hyndman, an association which poses as the only true church of British Social-

ism, which had very consistently concluded a life-and-death alliance with the French Possibilists<sup>87</sup> and sent a delegation to their congress and which therefore regarded in advance the May Day celebration decided on by the Marxist Congress as a sin against the Holy Ghost. The movement was growing over the head of the Federation as well; but to adhere to the Central Committee would mean placing itself under "Marxist" leadership; on the other hand, if the Trades Council were to take the matter into its own hands and if the celebration were held on the 4th of May instead of on the 1st, it would no longer be anything like the wicked "Marxist" May Day celebration and so they could join in. Despite the fact that the Social-Democratic Federation calls in its programme for a legalised eight-hour day, it eagerly clasped the hand proffered by the Trades Council.

Now the new allies, strange bedfellows though they were, played a trick on the Central Committee which would, it is true, be considered not only permissible but quite skilful in the political practice of the British bourgeoisie, but which European and American workers will probably find very mean. The fact is that in the case of popular meetings in Hyde Park the organisers must first announce their intention to the Board of Works and reach an agreement with it on particulars, securing specifically permission to drive over the grass the carts that are to serve as platforms. Besides, regulations say that after a meeting has been announced, no other meeting may be held in the Park on the same day. The Central Committee had not yet made the announcement; but the organisations allied against it had scarcely heard the news when they announced a meeting in the Park for May 4 and obtained permission for seven platforms, doing it behind the backs of the Central Committee.

The Trades Council and the Federation believed thereby to have rented the Park for May 4 and to have victory in their pocket. The former called a meeting of delegates from the trades unions, to which it also invited two delegates from the Central Committee; the latter sent three, including Mrs. Aveling. The Trades Council treated them as if it had

been master of the situation. It informed them that *only* trades unions, that is to say, no socialist unions or political clubs, could take part in the demonstration and carry banners. Just how the Social-Democratic Federation was to participate in the demonstration remained a mystery. The Council had already edited the resolution to be submitted to the meeting, and had *deleted* from it the demand for a *legalised* eight-hour day; discussion on a proposal for putting that demand back in the resolution was not allowed, nor was it voted on. And lastly, the Council refused to accept Mrs. Aveling as a delegate because, it said, she was no manual worker (which is not true), although its own President, Mr. Shipton, had not moved a finger in his own trade for fully fifteen years.

The workers on the Central Committee were outraged by the trick played on them. It looked as if the demonstration had been finally put into the hands of two organisations representing only negligible minorities of London workers. There seemed to be no remedy for it but to storm the platforms of the Trades Council as the gas workers had threatened. Then Edward Aveling went to the Ministry and secured, contrary to regulations, permission for the Central Committee as well to bring seven platforms to the Park. The attempt to juggle with the demonstration in the interest of the minority failed; the Trades Council pulled in its horns and was glad to be able to negotiate with the Central Committee on an equal footing over arrangements for the demonstration.

One has to know this background to appreciate the nature and significance of the demonstration. Prompted by the East End workers who had recently joined in the movement, the demonstration found such a universal response that the two organisations—which were no less hostile to each other than both of them together were to the fundamental idea of the demonstration—had to ally themselves in order to seize the leadership and use the meeting to their own advantage. On the one hand, a conservative Trades Council preaching equal rights for capital and labour; on the other, a Social-Democratic Federation playing at radicalism, and talking of social revolution whenever it is safe to do so, and the two allied to

do a mean trick with an eye to capitalising on a demonstration thoroughly hateful to both. Owing to these incidents, the May 4 meeting was split into two parts. On one side were the conservative workers, whose horizon does not go beyond the wage-labour system, flanked by a narrow-minded but ambitious socialist sect; on the other side, the great bulk of workers who had recently joined in the movement and who do not want to hear any more of the Manchesterism of the old trades unions<sup>88</sup> and want to win their complete emancipation by themselves, jointly with allies of their own choice, and not with those imposed by a small socialist coterie. On one side was stagnation represented by trades unions that have not yet quite freed themselves from the guild spirit, and by a narrow-minded sect backed by the meanest allies; on the other, the living free movement of the re-awakening British proletariat. And it was apparent even to the blindest where there was fresh life in that two-faced gathering and where stagnation. Around the seven platforms of the Central Committee were dense, immense crowds, marching up with music and banners, over a hundred thousand in the procession, reinforced by almost as many who had come severally; everywhere was harmony and enthusiasm, and yet order and organisation. At the platforms of the combined reactionaries, on the other hand, everything seemed dull; their procession was much weaker than the other, poorly organised, disorderly and mostly belated, so that in some places things got under way there only when the Central Committee was already through. While the Liberal leaders of some Radical clubs, and the officials of several trades unions rallied to the Trades Council, the members of the very same unions—in fact, four entire branches of the Social-Democratic Federation—marched with the Central Committee. For all that, the Trades Council succeeded in winning some attention, but the decisive success was achieved by the Central Committee.

What the numerous onlooking bourgeois politicians took home with them as the overall effect was the certainty that the English proletariat, which for fully forty years had trailed behind the big Liberal party and served it as voting cattle,

had awakened at last to new, independent life and action. There can be no doubt about that: on May 4, 1890, the English working class joined the great international army. And that is an epoch-making fact. The English proletariat has its roots in most advanced industrial development and, moreover, possesses the greatest freedom of political movement. Its long slumber—a result, on the one hand, of the failure of the Chartist movement of 1836-50 and, on the other hand, of the colossal industrial upswing of 1848-80—is finally broken. The grandchildren of the old Chartists are stepping into the line of battle. For eight years already the wide masses have been stirring now here, now there. Socialist groups have emerged, but none has been able to outgrow the bounds of a sect; agitators and alleged party leaders, including more speculators and pushers, they have remained officers without soldiers. It has almost always been like the famous Robert Blum column of the Baden campaign of 1849<sup>89</sup>: one colonel, eleven officers, one bugler and one private. And the bickering among those various Robert Blum columns over the leadership of the future proletarian army has been anything but edifying. This will stop before long, just as it has stopped in Germany and in Austria. The powerful movement of the masses will put an end to all these sects and little groups by absorbing the men and showing the officers their proper places. Those who don't like it may sneak away. It won't come off without friction, but come off it will, and the English proletarian army will, much sooner than some expect, be as united, as well organised and as determined as any, and will be jubilantly hailed by all its comrades on the Continent and in America.

Written between May  
5 and 21, 1890

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Articles on  
Britain*, pp. 402-08



## Frederick Engels

From *Brentano vs Marx*

### Apropos of Alleged Twisting of Quotations. The History of the Affair and Documents<sup>90</sup>

Herr Brentano's oft repeated statement that labour protection legislation and trade union organisation help improve the condition of the working class is by no means his own discovery. From *The Condition of the Working-Class in England* and *The Poverty of Philosophy* down to *Capital* and my own recent writings, Marx and I have said this a hundred times, but with very strong reservations.\* In the first place the favourable effects, in particular of trade union resistance, are limited to times of normal and buoyant business; in periods of stagnation and crisis they always fail; Herr Brentano's assertion that they "are able to paralyse the disastrous effects of the reserve army" is absurd boasting. And secondly—not to mention other reservations of less moment—neither the legislative defence nor trade union resistance will overcome the main thing that has to be removed, namely capitalist relations, which always reproduce the contradiction between the capitalist class and the wage-earning class. The mass of the wage earners remain condemned to lifelong wage labour; the gulf between them and the capitalists will become ever deeper and wider the more that modern large-scale

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\* See F. Engels, *The Condition of the Working-Class in England* (K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 295-596); K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (ibid., Vol. 6, pp. 105-212); Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, and also Engels' articles, "A Fair Day's Wages for a Fair Day's Work", "The Wages System", and "Trades Unions" (present edition, pp. 146-59).—Ed.

industry takes hold of all sectors of production. But since Herr Brentano wants to make the wage slave like to be a *contented* wage slave, he therefore has to exaggerate the good effects of labour protection, trade union resistance, social patching-up legislation, etc., colossally; and since we are able to set the simple facts against this exaggeration, he is furious....

Written between December  
1890 and February 1891

Translated from the German

## Frederick Engels

### From the *Introduction to K. Marx's Work* “*The Civil War in France*”

Against this transformation of the state and the organs of the state from servants of society into masters of society – an inevitable transformation in all previous states – the Commune made use of two infallible means. In the first place, it filled all posts – administrative, judicial and educational – by election on the basis of universal suffrage of all concerned, subject to the right of recall at any time by the same electors. And, in the second place, all officials, high or low, were paid only the wages received by other workers. The highest salary paid by the Commune to anyone was 6,000 francs. In this way an effective barrier to place-hunting and careerism was set up, even apart from the binding mandates to delegates to representative bodies which were added besides.

This shattering [*Sprengung*] of the former state power and its replacement by a new and truly democratic one is described in detail in the third section of *The Civil War*. But it was necessary to dwell briefly here once more on some of its features, because in Germany particularly the superstitious belief in the state has been carried over from philosophy into the general consciousness of the bourgeoisie and even of many workers. According to the philosophical conception, the state is the “realisation of the idea”, or the Kingdom of God on earth, translated into philosophical terms, the sphere in which eternal truth and justice is or should be realised. And from this follows a superstitious reverence for the state and everything connected with it, which takes root the more readily since people are accustomed from childhood to imagine that the affairs and interests common to the

whole of society could not be looked after otherwise than as they have been looked after in the past, that is, through the state and its lucratively positioned officials. And people think they have taken quite an extraordinarily bold step forward when they have rid themselves of belief in hereditary monarchy and swear by the democratic republic. In reality, however, the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy; and at best an evil inherited by the proletariat after its victorious struggle for class supremacy, whose worst sides the victorious proletariat, just like the Commune, cannot avoid having to lop off at once as much as possible until such time as a generation reared in new, free social conditions is able to throw the entire lumber of the state on the scrap heap.

Of late, the Social-Democratic philistine has once more been filled with wholesome terror at the words: Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Well and good, gentlemen, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

*London, on the twentieth anniversary  
of the Paris Commune, March 18, 1891*

*F. Engels*

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 188-89

## Frederick Engels

### *From A Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme of 1891*<sup>91</sup>

## II. Political Demands

The political demands of the draft have one great fault. It *lacks* precisely what should have been said. If all the 10 demands were granted we should indeed have more diverse means of achieving our main political aim, but the aim itself would in no wise have been achieved. As regards the rights being granted to the people and their representatives, the imperial constitution is, strictly speaking, a copy of the Prussian constitution of 1850, a constitution whose articles are extremely reactionary and give the government all the real power, while the chambers are not even allowed to reject taxes; a constitution, which proved during the period of the conflict that the government could do anything it liked with it.<sup>92</sup> The rights of the Reichstag are the same as those of the Prussian chamber and this is why Liebknecht called this Reichstag the fig-leaf of absolutism. It is an obvious absurdity to wish "to transform all the instruments of labour into common property" on the basis of this constitution and the system of small states sanctioned by it, on the basis of the "union" between Prussia and Reuss-Greiz-Schleiz-Lobenstein,<sup>93</sup> in which one has as many square miles as the other has square inches.

To touch on that is dangerous, however. Nevertheless, somehow or other, the thing has to be attacked. How necessary this is is shown precisely at the present time by opportunism, which is gaining ground in a large section of the Social-Democratic press. Fearing a renewal of the Anti-Socialist Law, or recalling all manner of over-hasty pronouncements made during the reign of that law, they now want the

Party to find the present legal order in Germany adequate for putting through all Party demands by peaceful means. These are attempts to convince oneself and the Party that "present-day society is developing towards socialism" without asking oneself whether it does not thereby just as necessarily outgrow the old social order and whether it will not have to burst this old shell by force, as a crab breaks its shell, and also whether in Germany, in addition, it will not have to smash the fetters of the still semi-absolutist, and moreover indescribably confused political order. One can conceive that the old society may develop peacefully into the new one in countries where the representatives of the people concentrate all power in their hands, where, if one has the support of the majority of the people, one can do as one sees fit in a constitutional way: in democratic republics such as France and the U.S.A., in monarchies such as Britain, where the imminent abdication of the dynasty in return for financial compensation is discussed in the press daily and where this dynasty is powerless against the people. But in Germany where the government is almost omnipotent and the Reichstag and all other representative bodies have no real power, to advocate such a thing in Germany, when, moreover, there is no need to do so, means removing the fig-leaf from absolutism and becoming oneself a screen for its nakedness.

In the long run such a policy can only lead one's own Party astray. They push general, abstract political questions into the foreground, thereby concealing the immediate concrete questions, which at the moment of the first great events, the first political crisis automatically pose themselves. What can result from this except that at the decisive moment the Party suddenly proves helpless and that uncertainty and discord on the most decisive issues reign in it because these issues have never been discussed? Must there be a repetition of what happened with protective tariffs, which were declared to be a matter of concern only to the bourgeoisie, not affecting the interests of the workers in the least, that is, a matter on which everyone could vote as he wished? Are not many people now going to the opposite extreme and are they not, in contrast to

the bourgeoisie, who have become addicted to protective tariffs, rehashing the economic distortions of Cobden and Bright and preaching them as the purest socialism—this Manchesterism<sup>94</sup> unadulterated? This forgetting of the great, the principal considerations for the momentary interests of the day, this struggling and striving for the success of the moment regardless of later consequences, this sacrifice of the future of the movement for its present, may be “honestly” meant, but it is and remains opportunism, and “honest” opportunism is perhaps the most dangerous of all!

Which are these ticklish, but very significant points?

*First.* If one thing is certain it is that our Party and the working class can only come to power under the form of a democratic republic. This is even the specific form for the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the Great French Revolution has already shown. It would be inconceivable for our best people to become ministers under an emperor, as Miquel. It would seem that from a legal point of view it is inadvisable to include the demand for a republic directly in the programme, although this was possible even under Louis Philippe in France, and is now in Italy. But the fact that in Germany it is not permitted to advance even a republican party programme openly, proves how totally mistaken is the belief that a republic, and not only a republic, but also communist society, can be established in a cosy, peaceful way.

However, the question of the republic could possibly be passed by. What, however, in my opinion should and could be included is the demand for *the concentration of all political power in the hands of the people's representatives*. That would suffice for the time being if it is impossible to go any further.

*Second.* The reconstitution of Germany. On the one hand, the system of small states must be abolished—just try to revolutionise society while there are the Bavarian-Württemberg reservation rights<sup>95</sup>—and the map of present-day Thuringia, for example, is such a sorry sight. On the other hand, Prussia must cease to exist and must be broken up into self-governing provinces for the specific Prussianism to stop weighing on Germany. The system of small states and Prussianism are the

two sides of the antithesis now gripping Germany in a vice, in which one side must always serve as the excuse and justification for the existence of the other.

What should take its place? In my view, the proletariat can only use the form of the one and indivisible republic. In the gigantic territory of the United States, the federal republic is still, on the whole, a necessity, although in the Eastern states it is already becoming a hindrance. It would be a step forward in Britain where the two islands are peopled by four nations and in spite of a single Parliament three different systems of legislation already exist side by side. In little Switzerland, it has long been a hindrance, tolerable only because Switzerland is content to be a purely passive member of the European state system. For Germany, federalisation on the Swiss model would be an enormous step backward. Two points distinguish a union state from a completely unified state: first, that each member state, each canton, has its own civil and criminal legislative and judicial system, and, second, that alongside a popular chamber there is also a federal chamber in which each canton, whether large or small, votes as such. The first we have luckily overcome and we shall not be so childish as to reintroduce it, the second we have in the Bundesrat and we could do very well without it, since our "federal state" generally constitutes a transition to a unified state. The revolution from above of 1866 and 1870 must not be reversed but supplemented and improved by a movement from below.

So, then, a unified republic. But not in the sense of the present French Republic, which is nothing but the Empire established in 1798 without the Emperor.<sup>96</sup> From 1792 to 1798 each French department, each commune, enjoyed complete self-government on the American model, and this is what we too must have. How self-government is to be organised and how we can manage without a bureaucracy has been shown to us by America and the First French Republic, and is being shown even today by Australia, Canada and the other English colonies. And a provincial and communal self-government of this type is far freer than, for instance, Swiss



federalism, under which, it is true, the canton is very independent in relation to the federation, but is also independent in relation to the district and the commune. The cantonal governments appoint the district governors and prefects, which is unknown in English-speaking countries and which we want to abolish here as resolutely in the future as the Prussian Landräte and Regierungsräte.

Probably few of these points should be included in the programme. I mention them also mainly to describe the system in Germany where such matters cannot be discussed openly, and to emphasise the self-deception of those who wish to transform such a system in a legal way into communist society. Further, to remind the Party Executive that there are other important political questions besides direct legislation by the people and the gratuitous administration of justice without which we can also ultimately get by. In the generally unstable conditions these questions may become urgent at any time and what will happen then if they have not been discussed by us beforehand and no agreement has been reached on them?

However, what can be included in the programme and can, at least indirectly, serve as a hint of what may not be said directly is the following demand:

“Complete self-government in the provinces, districts and communes through officials elected by universal suffrage. The abolition of all local and provincial authorities appointed by the state.”

Whether or not it is possible to formulate other programme demands in connection with the points discussed above, I am less able to judge here than you can over there. But it would be desirable to debate these questions within the Party before it is too late.

1. I fail to see the difference between “election rights and voting rights”, between “elections and voting” respectively. If such a distinction should be made, it should in any case be expressed more clearly or explained in a commentary appended to the draft.

2. “The right of the people to propose and reject” *what?*

All laws or the decisions of the people's representatives – this should be added.

5. Complete separation of the Church from the state. All religious communities without exception are to be treated by the state as private associations. They are to be deprived of any support from public funds and of all influence on public schools. (They cannot be prohibited from forming their *own* schools out of their *own* funds and from teaching their own nonsense in them.)

6. In that case the point on the "secular character of the school" no longer arises, since it relates to the preceding paragraph.

8 and 9. Here I want to draw attention to the following: These points demand that the following should be taken over by the state: (1) *the bar*, (2) *medical services*, (3) *pharmaceutics*, *dentistry*, *midwifery*, *nursing*, etc., etc., and later the demand is advanced that workers' insurance become a state concern. Can all this be entrusted to Herr von Caprivi? And is it compatible with the rejection of all state socialism, as stated above?

10. Here I should say: "Progressive ... tax to cover all expenditure of the state, district and community, insofar as taxes are required for it. Abolition of all indirect state and local taxes, duties, etc." The rest is a redundant commentary or motivation that tends to weaken the effect.

### III. Economic Demands

To item 2. Nowhere more so than in Germany does the right of association require guarantees also from the *state*.

The closing phrase: "for the regulation", etc., should be added *as item 4* and be given a corresponding form. In this connection it should be noted that we would be taken in good and proper by labour chambers made up half of workers and half of entrepreneurs. For years to come the entrepreneurs would always have a majority, for only a single black sheep among the workers would be needed to achieve this. If it is not agreed upon that in cases of conflict *both halves* express

*separate* opinions, it would be much better to have a chamber of entrepreneurs and *in addition an independent chamber of workers.*

In conclusion I should like to request that the draft be compared once more with the French programme,<sup>97</sup> where some things seem better precisely for Section III. Being pressed for time, I unfortunately cannot search for the Spanish programme,<sup>98</sup> which is also very good in many respects.

Written between June 18  
and 29, 1891

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 3, pp. 433-38

## Frederick Engels

### From *Socialism in Germany*

German socialism dates from long before 1848. From the first it exhibited two independent trends: on the one hand a purely working class movement, stemming from French worker communism, from which, at one stage of its evolution, came Weitling's utopian communism; on the other, a theoretical movement, sprung from the disintegration of Hegelian philosophy. This trend was dominated immediately, right from the start, by the name of Marx. The *Communist Manifesto* of January 1848 marked the fusion of the two trends, a fusion completed and sealed in the fiery furnace of the revolution, when they all, workers and ex-philosophers, uprightly stood their ground.

After the defeat of the European Revolution in 1849 socialism was forced to restrict itself to a secret existence in Germany. Only in 1862 did Lassalle, a disciple of Marx's, raise the socialist banner again. But this was no longer the bold socialism of the *Manifesto*; what Lassalle demanded for the working class was the founding of production co-operative societies by means of public funds—a revised version of the programme of the Paris workers who were affiliated, before 1848, to Marrast's true-blue republican *National*, and consequently a programme that the pure republicans opposed to Louis Blanc's "Organisation of Labour".<sup>99</sup> Lassallean socialism, we see, was very modest. Yet it marked the starting point of the second stage of the development of socialism in Germany. For Lassalle's talent, fiery zeal, and indomitable energy succeeded in starting a working-class movement to which everything the German proletariat did independently for ten years was linked by positive or negative, friendly or inimical ties.

Could pure Lassalleanism, as it was and became, as a matter of fact satisfy the socialist demands of the nation that produced the *Manifesto*? It was impossible. And so, thanks above all to the efforts of Liebknecht and Bebel, a workers' party soon arose that openly proclaimed the principles of the *Manifesto* of 1848.<sup>100</sup> Then, in 1867, three years after Lassalle's death, Marx's *Capital* appeared, and the decline of specific Lassalleanism dated from the day of its publication. The views of *Capital* more and more became the common property of all German socialists, of Lassalleans no less than the others. More than once whole groups of Lassalleans passed over, with banners flying and drums beating, to the new "Eisenach" Party. The latter gained continually in strength, so that it soon came to open hostilities between it and the Lassalleans; and they fought each other with particular violence, even with cudgels, at a time when there was no longer a real point of issue left between the contestants, when the principles and arguments, and even the means of fighting, of the one coincided with those of the other on all essential points.

That was precisely the moment when the representatives of both trends in the Reichstag sat side by side, and the need for joint action made itself doubly felt. Vis-à-vis the parties of law and order the mutual enmity of the socialists was simply ridiculous. The position became quite intolerable. Then, in 1875, there was a fusion,<sup>101</sup> and since then the once hostile brethren have continually formed a single, close, united family. And if there had been a dog's chance of their falling out, Bismarck obligingly prevented it by outlawing German socialism by his notorious exceptional law in 1878. The hammer blows of persecution falling impartially finally forged Eisenachers and Lassalleans into a single, homogeneous mass. And today the Social-Democratic Party publishes an official edition of the works of Lassalle with one hand, while simultaneously, with the other—and the help of old Lassalleans—it is in effect effacing the last traces of specific Lassalleanism from its programme.

## Frederick Engels

### From *Special Introduction to the English Edition of 1892 of "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific"*

...In England too, the working people have begun to move again. They are, no doubt, shackled by traditions of various kinds. Bourgeois traditions, such as the widespread belief that there can be but two parties, Conservatives and Liberals, and that the working class must work out its salvation by and through the great Liberal Party. Working-men's traditions, inherited from their first tentative efforts at independent action, such as the exclusion, from ever so many old Trade Unions, of all applicants who have not gone through a regular apprenticeship; which means the breeding, by every such union, of its own blacklegs. But for all that the English working class is moving, as even Professor Brentano<sup>102</sup> has sorrowfully had to report to his brother Katheder-Socialists. It moves, like all things in England, with a slow and measured step, with hesitation here, with more or less unfruitful, tentative attempts there; it moves now and then with an overcautious mistrust of the name of socialism, while it gradually absorbs the substance; and the movement spreads and seizes one layer of the workers after another. It has now shaken out of their torpor the unskilled labourers of the East End of London, and we all know what a splendid impulse these fresh forces have given it in return. And if the pace of the movement is not up to the impatience of some people, let them not forget that it is the working class which keeps alive the finest qualities of the English character, and that, if a step in advance is once gained in England, it is, as a rule, never lost afterwards. If the sons of the old Chartists, for reasons explained above, were not quite up to the mark, the grandsons bid fair to be worthy of their forefathers.

Written on April 20, 1892

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 3, pp. 113-14

## Frederick Engels

### From *Preface to the Second German Edition* of "*The Condition of the Working Class in England*"

...The English working-class movement has again made a big step forward. The parliamentary elections which took place the other day have given formal notice to both official parties, the Conservatives and the Liberals, that both of them would thereafter have to reckon with a third party, the workers' party. This workers' party is only just being formed; its elements are still occupied with casting off traditional prejudices of every sort—bourgeois, old trade-unionist and even doctrinaire-Socialist—so that they may finally be able to get together on a basis common to all of them. And yet the instinct to unite which they followed was already so great that it produced election results hitherto unheard of in England. In London two workers stood for election,<sup>a</sup> and openly as Socialists at that; the Liberals did not dare to put up their own men against them and the two Socialists won by overwhelming and unexpected majorities. In Middlesborough a workers' candidate<sup>b</sup> contested a seat with a Liberal and a Conservative and was elected in spite of the two; on the other hand, the new workers' candidates who had made compacts with the Liberals failed hopelessly of election, with the exception of a single one. Among the former so-called workers' representatives, that is, those people who are forgiven their being members of the working class because they themselves would like to drown their quality of being workers in the

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<sup>a</sup> James Keir Hardie and John Burns.—*Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> Joseph Chavelock Wilson.—*Ed.*

ocean of their liberalism, Henry Broadhurst, the most important representative of the old unionism, was completely snowed under because he came out against the eight-hour day. In two Glasgow, one Salford and several other constituencies, independent workers' candidates ran against candidates of both the old parties. They were beaten, but so were the Liberal candidates. In short, in a number of big city and industrial election districts the workers have definitely severed all ties with the two old parties and thus achieved direct or indirect successes beyond anything witnessed in any previous election. And boundless is the joy thereof among the working people. For the first time they have seen and felt what they can achieve by using their suffrage in the interest of their class. The spell which the superstitious belief in the 'great Liberal Party' cast over the English workers for almost 40 years is broken. They have seen by dint of striking examples that they, the workers, are the decisive power in England if they only want to and know what they want; and the elections of 1892 marked the beginning of such knowing and wanting. The Continental workers' movement will take care of the rest. By their further successes the Germans and the French, who are already so numerous represented in their Parliaments and local councils, will keep the spirit of emulation of the English going at a quite adequate pace. And if in the not very distant future it appears that this new Parliament cannot get anywhere with Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Gladstone cannot get anywhere with this Parliament, the English workers' party will surely be sufficiently constituted to put an early end to the seesaw of the two old parties, who have been succeeding each other in the government and by this very means perpetuating the rule of the bourgeoisie.

*F. Engels*

*London, July 21, 1892*

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 452



## Frederick Engels

### *Letter to the Editor of "Vorwärts"*

According to the reports in the Party press Comrade Vollmar referred, during the farm debate at the Frankfort Party Congress on October 25, to the resolutions of the French Socialist Congress in Nantes<sup>103</sup> as "having met with the *express approval of Frederick Engels*". According to *Vorwärts*<sup>104</sup> of November 10 this was also repeated in the enemy press.<sup>105</sup> I am therefore compelled to declare that there is a mistake here, and that Vollmar must have been quite wrongly informed about me.

As far as I remember I sent only two messages to France in connection with the Nantes programme. The first, *before* the Congress, in answer to the inquiry of a French comrade,<sup>a</sup> consisted in the following: the development of capitalism is irrevocably abolishing smallholder land ownership. Our Party is quite clear about that, but it has no reason at all to accelerate this process even further by its own interference. There is therefore no point in principle in opposing properly chosen measures that would make their inevitable ruin less painful to the smallholders; to go further, to try and preserve the smallholders permanently, and therefore strive for the (in my opinion) economically impossible and sacrifice principle, would be reactionary.

The second, *after* the Congress, was restricted to the hunch that our French friends would remain alone in the socialist world in their attempt to perpetuate not only smallholder prop-

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<sup>a</sup> Presumably Paul Lafargue.—Ed.

erty but also the small tenant farmer who exploits others' labour.

So far as I spoke on this point, I said the contrary to what was reported to Vollmar.

Once caught up in this business, however, I can hardly extricate myself without expressing myself plainly. I am, therefore, planning a short article for *Neue Zeit*<sup>106</sup> to make an explanation of, and the reasons for, my view available<sup>a</sup>

*F. Engels*

London, November 12, 1894

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> See present edition, pp. 194-208.—*Ed.*

## Frederick Engels

### From *The Peasant Question in France and Germany*

#### I

The Party did such a good business with this programme<sup>107</sup> among the peasants in the most diverse parts of France that—since appetite comes with eating—one felt constrained to suit it still more to their taste. It was felt, however, that this would be treading on dangerous ground. How was the peasant to be helped, not the peasant as a future proletarian but as a present propertied peasant without violating the basic principles of the general socialist programme? In order to meet this objection the new practical proposals were prefaced by a theoretical preamble, which seeks to prove that it is in keeping with the principles of socialism to protect small-peasant property from destruction by the capitalist mode of production although one is perfectly aware that this destruction is inevitable. Let us now examine more closely this preamble as well as the demands themselves, which were adopted by the Nantes Congress in September of this year.

The preamble begins as follows:

“Whereas according to the terms of the general programme of the Party producers can be free only in so far as they are in possession of the means of production;

“Whereas in the sphere of industry these means of production have already reached such a degree of capitalist centralisation that they can be restored to the producers only in collective or social form, but in the sphere of agriculture—at least in present-day France—this is by no means the case, the means of production, namely, the land, being in very many localities still in the hands of the individual producers themselves as their individual possession;

"Whereas even if this state of affairs characterised by small-holding ownership is irretrievably doomed (*est fatalement appelé à disparaître*), still it is not for socialism to hasten this doom, as its task does not consist in separating property from labour but, on the contrary, in uniting both of these factors of all production by placing them in the same hands, factors the separation of which entails the servitude and poverty of the workers reduced to proletarians;

"Whereas, on the one hand, it is the duty of socialism to put the agricultural proletarians again in possession—collective or social in form—of the great domains after expropriating their present idle owners, it is, on the other hand, no less its imperative duty to maintain the peasants themselves tilling their patches of land in possession of the same as against the fisk, the usurer and the encroachments of the newly-arisen big landowners;

"Whereas it is expedient to extend this protection also to the producers who as tenants or sharecroppers (*mtayers*) cultivate the land owned by others and who, if they exploit day labourers, are to a certain extent compelled to do so because of the exploitation to which they themselves are subjected—

"Therefore the Workers' Party—which unlike the anarchists does not count on an increase and spread of poverty for the transformation of the social order but expects labour and society in general to be emancipated only by the organisation and concerted efforts of the workers of both country and town, by their taking possession of the government and legislation—has adopted the following agrarian programme in order thereby to bring together all the elements of rural production, all occupations which by virtue of various rights and titles utilise the national soil, to wage an identical struggle against the common foe: the feudality of landownership."

Now for a closer examination of these "whereases".

To begin with, the statement in the French programme that freedom of the producers presupposes the possession of the means of production must be supplemented by those immediately following: that the possession of the means of production is possible only in two forms: either as individual possession, which form never and nowhere existed for the producers in general, and is daily being made more impossible by industrial progress; or as common possession, a form the material and intellectual preconditions of which have been established by the development of capitalist society itself; that therefore taking *collective* possession of the means of production must be fought for by all means at the disposal of the proletariat.

The common possession of the means of production is thus set forth here as the sole principal goal to be striven for. Not

only in industry, where the ground has already been prepared, but in general, hence also in agriculture. According to the programme individual possession never and nowhere obtained generally for all producers; for that very reason and because industrial progress removes it anyhow, socialism is not interested in maintaining but rather in removing it; because where it exists and in so far as it exists it makes common possession impossible. Once we cite the programme in support of our contention we must cite the entire programme, which considerably modifies the proposition quoted in Nantes; for it makes the general historical truth expressed in it dependent upon the conditions under which alone it can remain a truth today in Western Europe and North America.

Possession of the means of production by the individual producers nowadays no longer grants these producers real freedom. Handicraft has already been ruined in the cities; in metropolises like London it has already disappeared entirely, having been superseded by large-scale industry, the sweatshop system and miserable bunglers who thrive on bankruptcy. The self-supporting small peasant is neither in the safe possession of his tiny patch of land nor is he free. He as well as his house, his farmstead and his few fields belong to the usurer; his livelihood is more uncertain than that of the proletarian, who at least does have tranquil days now and then, which is never the case with the eternally tortured debt slave. Strike out Article 2,102 of the Civil Code, provide by law that a definite amount of a peasant's farm implements, cattle, etc., shall be exempt from levy and distraint; yet you cannot ensure him against an emergency in which he is compelled to sell his cattle "voluntarily", in which he must sign himself away body and soul to the usurer and be glad to get a reprieve. Your attempt to protect the small peasant in his property does not protect his liberty but only the particular form of his servitude; it prolongs a situation in which he can neither live nor die. It is, therefore, entirely out of place here to cite the first paragraph of your programme as authority for your contention.

The preamble states that in present-day France the means

of production, that is, the land, is in very many localities still in the hands of individual producers as their individual possession; that, however, it is not the task of socialism to separate property from labour, but, on the contrary, to unite these two factors of all production by placing them in the same hands. As has already been pointed out, the latter in this general form is by no means the task of socialism. The latter's task is rather only to transfer the means of production to the producers as their *common possession*. As soon as we lose sight of this the above statement becomes directly misleading in that it implies that it is the mission of socialism to convert the present sham property of the small peasant in his fields into real property, that is to say, to convert the small tenant into an owner and the indebted owner into a debtless owner. Undoubtedly socialism is interested to see that the false semblance of peasant property should disappear, but not in this manner.

At any rate we have now got so far that the preamble can straightforwardly declare it to be the duty of socialism, indeed, its imperative duty,

"to maintain the peasants themselves tilling their patches of land in possession of the same as against the fisk, the usurer and the encroachments of the newly-arisen big landowners".

The preamble thus imposes upon socialism the imperative duty to carry out something which it had declared to be impossible in the preceding paragraph. It charges it to "maintain" the small-holding ownership of the peasants although it itself states that this form of ownership is "irretrievably doomed". What are the fisk, the usurer and the newly-arisen big landowners if not the instruments by means of which capitalist production brings about this inevitable doom? What means "socialism" is to employ to protect the peasant against this trinity we shall see below.

But not only the small peasant is to be protected in his property. It is likewise

"expedient to extend this protection also to the producers who as tenants or sharecroppers (*métayers*) cultivate the land owned by others and who, if

they exploit day labourers, are to a certain extent compelled to do so because of the exploitation to which they themselves are subjected”.

Here we are entering upon ground that is passing strange. Socialism is particularly opposed to the exploitation of wage labour. And here it is declared to be the imperative duty of socialism to protect the French tenants when they “*exploit* day labourers”, as the text literally states! And that because they are compelled to do so to a certain extent by “the exploitation to which they themselves are subjected”!

How easy and pleasant it is to keep on coasting once you are on the toboggan slide! When now the big and middle peasants of Germany come to ask the French Socialists to intercede with the German Party Executive to get the German Social-Democratic Party to protect them in the exploitation of their male and female farm servants, citing in support of their contention “the exploitation to which they themselves are subjected” by usurers, tax collectors, grain speculators and cattle dealers, what will they answer? What guarantee have they that our agrarian big landlords will not send them Count Kanitz (as he also submitted a proposal like theirs providing for a state monopoly of grain importation) and likewise ask for socialist protection of their exploitation of the rural workers, citing in support “the exploitation to which they themselves are subjected” by stock-jobbers, money lenders and grain speculators?

Let us say here at the outset that the intentions of our French friends are not as bad as one would suppose. The above sentence, we are told, is intended to cover only a quite special case, namely, the following: In Northern France, just as in our sugar-beet districts, land is leased to the peasants subject to the obligation to cultivate beets, on conditions which are extremely onerous. They must deliver the beets to a stated factory at a price fixed by it, must buy definite seed, use a fixed quantity of prescribed fertiliser and on delivery are badly cheated into the bargain. We know all about this in Germany, as well. But if this sort of peasant is to be taken under one’s wing this must be said openly and expressly. As the

sentence reads now, in its unlimited general form, it is a direct violation not only of the French programme but also of the fundamental principle of socialism in general, and its authors will have no cause for complaint if this careless piece of editing is used against them in various quarters contrary to their intention.

Also capable of such misconstruction are the concluding words of the preamble according to which it is the task of the Socialist Workers' Party

"to bring together all the elements of rural production, all occupations which by virtue of various rights and titles utilise the national soil, to wage an identical struggle against the common foe: the feudality of landownership".

I flatly deny that the socialist workers' party of any country is charged with the task of taking into its fold, in addition to the rural proletarians and the small peasants, also the middle and big peasants and perhaps even the tenants of big estates, the capitalist cattle breeders and the other capitalist exploiters of the national soil. To all of them the feudality of landownership may appear to be a common foe. On certain questions we may make common cause with them and be able to fight side by side with them for definite aims. We can use in our Party individuals from every class of society, but have no use whatever for any groups representing capitalist, middle-bourgeois or middle-peasant interests. Here too what they mean is not as bad as it looks. The authors evidently never even gave all this a thought. But unfortunately they allowed themselves to be carried away by their zeal for generalisation and they must not be surprised if they are taken at their word.

After the preamble come the newly-adopted addenda to the programme itself. They betray the same cursory editing as the preamble.

The article providing that the communities must procure farming machinery and lease it at cost to the peasants is modified so as to provide that the communities are, in the first place, to receive state subsidies for this purpose and, secondly, that the machinery is to be placed at the disposal of



the small peasants gratis. This further concession will not be of much avail to the small peasants, whose fields and mode of production permit of but little use of machinery.

Furthermore,

“substitution of a single progressive tax on all incomes upward of 3,000 francs for all existing direct and indirect taxes”.

A similar demand has been included for many years in almost every Social-Democratic programme. But that this demand is raised in the special interests of the small peasants is something new and shows only how little its real scope has been calculated. Take Great Britain. There the state budget amounts to 90 million pounds sterling, of which  $13\frac{1}{2}$  to 14 million are accounted for by the income tax. The smaller part of the remaining 76 million is contributed by taxing business (post and telegraph charges, stamp tax), but by far the greater part of it by imposts on articles of mass consumption, by the constantly repeated clipping of small, imperceptible amounts totalling many millions from the incomes of all members of the population, but particularly of its poorer sections. In present-day society it is scarcely possible to defray state expenditures in any other way. Suppose the whole 90 million are saddled in Great Britain on the incomes of 120 pounds sterling = 3,000 francs and in excess thereof by the imposition of a progressive direct tax. The average annual accumulation, the annual increase of the aggregate national wealth, amounted in 1865 to 1875, according to Giffen, to 240 million pounds sterling. Let us assume it now equals 300 million annually; a tax burden of 90 million would consume almost one-third of the aggregate accumulation. In other words, no government except a Socialist one can undertake any such thing. When the Socialists are at the helm there will be things for them to carry into execution alongside of which that tax reform will figure as a mere, and quite insignificant, settlement for the moment while altogether different prospects open up before the small peasants.

One seems to realise that the peasants will have to wait rather long for this tax reform so that “in the meantime” (*en attendant*) the following prospect is held out to them:

"Abolition of taxes on land for all peasants living by their own labour, and reduction of these taxes on all mortgaged plots."

The latter half of this demand can refer only to peasant farms *too big* to be operated by the family itself; hence it is again a provision in favour of peasants who "exploit day labourers".

Again:

"Hunting and fishing rights without restrictions other than such as may be necessary for the conservation of game and fish and the protection of growing crops."

This sounds very popular but the concluding part of the sentence wipes out the introductory part. How many rabbits, partridges, pikes and carps are there even today per peasant family in all the rural localities? Would you say more than would warrant giving each peasant just *one* day a year for free hunting and fishing?

"Lowering of the legal and conventional rate of interest" -

hence renewed usury laws, a renewed attempt to introduce a police measure that has always failed everywhere for the last two thousand years. If a small peasant finds himself in a position where recourse to a usurer is the lesser evil to him, the usurer will always find ways and means of sucking him dry without falling foul of the usury laws. This measure could serve at most to soothe the small peasant but he will derive no advantage from it; on the contrary, it makes it more difficult for him to obtain credit precisely when he needs it most.

"Medical service free of charge and medicines at cost price" -

this at any rate is not a measure for the special protection of the peasants. The German programme goes further and demands that medicine too should be free of charge.

"Compensation for families of reservists called up for military duty for the duration of their service" -

this already exists, though most inadequately, in Germany and Austria and is likewise no special peasant demand.

“Lowering of the transport charges for fertiliser and farm machinery and products”–

is on the whole in effect in Germany, and mainly in the interests–of the big landowners.

“Immediate preparatory work for the elaboration of a plan of public works for the amelioration of the soil and the development of agricultural production”–

leaves everything in the realm of uncertainty and beautiful promises and is also above all in the interest of the big landed estates.

In brief, after the tremendous theoretical effort exhibited in the preamble the practical proposals of the new agrarian programme are even more unrevealing as to the way in which the French Workers’ Party expects to be able to maintain the small peasants in possession of their small holdings, which, on its own testimony, are irretrievably doomed.

## II

In one point our French comrades are absolutely right: No lasting revolutionary transformation is possible in France *against the will* of the small peasant. Only it seems to me they have not got the right leverage if they mean to bring the peasant under their influence.

They are bent, it seems, to win over the small peasant forthwith, possibly even for the next general elections. This they can hope to achieve only by making very risky general assurances in defence of which they are compelled to set forth even much more risky theoretical considerations. Then, upon closer examination, it appears that the general assurances are self-contradictory (promise to maintain a state of affairs which, as one declares oneself, is irretrievably doomed) and that the various measures are either wholly without effect (usury laws), or are general workers’ demands or demands which also benefit the big landowners or finally are such as are of no great importance by any means in promoting the interests of the small peasants. In consequence, the directly

practical part of the programme of itself corrects the erroneous initial part and reduces the apparently formidable grandiloquence of the preamble to actually innocent proportions.

Let us say it outright: in view of the prejudices arising out of their entire economic position, their upbringing and their isolated mode of life, prejudices nurtured by the bourgeois press and the big landowners, we can win the mass of the small peasants forthwith only if we make them a promise which we ourselves know we shall not be able to keep. That is, we must promise them not only to protect their property in any event against all economic forces sweeping upon them but also to relieve them of the burdens which already now oppress them: to transform the tenant into a free owner and to pay the debts of the owner succumbing to the weight of his mortgage. If we could do this we should again arrive at the point from which the present situation would necessarily develop anew. We shall not have emancipated the peasant but only given him a reprieve.

But it is not in our interests to win the peasant overnight only to lose him again on the morrow if we cannot keep our promise. We have no more use for the peasant as a Party member if he expects us to perpetuate his property in his small holding than for the small handicraftsman who would fain be perpetuated as a master. These people belong to the anti-Semites. Let them go to them and let them promise to salvage their small enterprises. Once they learn there what these glittering phrases really amount to and what melodies are fiddled down from the anti-Semitic heavens they will realise in ever-increasing measure that we who promise less and look for salvation in entirely different quarters are after all more reliable people. If the French had the strident anti-Semitic demagogy we have they would hardly have committed the Nantes mistake.

What, then, is our attitude towards the small peasantry? How shall we have to deal with it on the day of our accession to power?

To begin with, the French programme is absolutely correct

in stating: that we foresee the inevitable doom of the small peasant but that it is not our mission to hasten it by any interference on our part.

Secondly, it is just as evident that when we are in possession of state power we shall not even think of forcibly expropriating the small peasants (regardless of whether with or without compensation), as we shall have to do in the case of the big landowners. Our task relative to the small peasant consists, in the first place, in effecting a transition of his private enterprise and private possession to co-operative ones, not forcibly but by dint of example and the proffer of social assistance for this purpose. And then of course we shall have ample means of showing to the small peasant prospective advantages that must be obvious to him even today.

Almost twenty years ago the Danish Socialists, who have only one real city in their country—Copenhagen—and therefore have to rely almost exclusively on peasant propaganda outside of it, were already drawing up such plans. The peasants of a village or parish—there are many big individual homesteads in Denmark—were to pool their land to form a single big farm in order to cultivate it for common account and distribute the yield in proportion to the land, money and labour contributed. In Denmark small landed property plays only a secondary role. But if we apply this idea to a region of small holdings we shall find that if these are pooled and the aggregate area cultivated on a large scale, part of the labour power employed hitherto is rendered superfluous. It is precisely this saving of labour that represents one of the main advantages of large-scale farming. Employment can be found for this labour power in two ways. Either additional land taken from big estates in the neighbourhood is placed at the disposal of the peasant co-operative or the peasants in question are provided with the means and the opportunity of engaging in industry as an accessory calling, primarily and as far as possible for their own use. In either case their economic position is improved and simultaneously the general social directing agency is assured the necessary influence to transform the peasant co-operative to a higher form, and to equalise the

rights and duties of the co-operative as a whole as well as of its individual members with those of the other departments of the entire community. How this is to be carried out in practice in each particular case will depend upon the circumstances of the case and the conditions under which we take possession of political power. We may thus possibly be in a position to offer these co-operatives yet further advantages: assumption of their entire mortgage indebtedness by the national bank with a simultaneous sharp reduction of the interest rate; advances from public funds for the establishment of large-scale production (to be made not necessarily or primarily in money but in the form of required products: machinery, artificial fertiliser, etc.), and other advantages.

The main point is and will be to make the peasants understand that we can save, preserve their houses and fields for them only by transforming them into co-operative property operated co-operatively. It is precisely the individual farming conditioned by individual ownership that drives the peasants to their doom. If they insist on individual operation they will inevitably be driven from house and home and their antiquated mode of production superseded by capitalist large-scale production. That is how the matter stands. Now we come along and offer the peasants the opportunity of introducing large-scale production themselves, not for account of the capitalists but for their own, common account. Should it really be impossible to make the peasants understand that this is in their own interest, that it is the sole means of their salvation?

Neither now nor at any time in the future can we promise the small-holding peasants to preserve their individual property and individual enterprise against the overwhelming power of capitalist production. We can only promise them that we shall not interfere in their property relations by force, against their will. Moreover, we can advocate that the struggle of the capitalists and big landlords against the small peasants should be waged from now on with a minimum of unfair means and that direct robbery and cheating, which are practised only too often, be as far as possible prevented. In

this we shall succeed only in exceptional cases. Under the developed capitalist mode of production nobody can tell where honesty ends and cheating begins. But always it will make a considerable difference whether public authority is on the side of the cheater or the cheated. We of course are decidedly on the side of the small peasant; we shall do everything at all permissible to make his lot more bearable, to facilitate his transition to the co-operative should he decide to do so, and even to make it possible for him to remain on his small holding for a protracted length of time to think the matter over, should he still be unable to bring himself to this decision. We do this not only because we consider the small peasant living by his own labour as virtually belonging to us, but also in the direct interest of the Party. The greater the number of peasants whom we can save from being actually hurled down into the proletariat, whom we can win to our side while they are still peasants, the more quickly and easily the social transformation will be accomplished. It will serve us nought to wait with this transformation until capitalist production has developed everywhere to its utmost consequences, until the last small handicraftsman and the last small peasant have fallen victim to capitalist large-scale production. The material sacrifice to be made for this purpose in the interest of the peasants and to be defrayed out of public funds can, from the point of view of capitalist economy, be viewed only as money thrown away, but it is nevertheless an excellent investment because it will effect a perhaps tenfold saving in the cost of the social reorganisation in general. In this sense we can, therefore, afford to deal very liberally with the peasants. This is not the place to go into details, to make concrete proposals to that end; here we can deal only with general principles.

Accordingly we can do no greater disservice to the Party as well as to the small peasants than to make promises that even only create the impression that we intend to preserve the small holdings permanently. It would mean directly to block the way of the peasants to their emancipation and to degrade the Party to the level of rowdy anti-Semitism. On the contrary, it is the duty of our Party to make clear to the pea-

sants again and again that their position is absolutely hopeless as long as capitalism holds sway, that it is absolutely impossible to preserve their small holdings for them as such, that capitalist large-scale production is absolutely sure to run over their impotent antiquated system of small production as a train runs over a pushcart. If we do this we shall act in conformity with the inevitable trend of economic development, and this development will not fail to bring our words home to the small peasants.

Incidentally, I cannot leave this subject without expressing my conviction that the authors of the Nantes programme are also essentially of my opinion. Their insight is much too great for them not to know that areas now divided into small holdings are also bound to become common property. They themselves admit that small-holding ownership is destined to disappear. The report of the National Council drawn up by Lafargue and delivered at the Congress of Nantes likewise fully corroborates this view. It has been published in German in the Berlin *Sozialdemokrat* of October 18 of this year.<sup>108</sup> The contradictory nature of the expressions used in the Nantes programme itself betrays the fact that what the authors actually say is not what they want to say. If they are not understood and their statements misused, as actually has already happened, that is of course their own fault. At any rate, they will have to elucidate their programme and the next French congress revise it thoroughly.

We now come to the bigger peasants. Here as a result of the divisions of inheritance as well as of indebtedness and forced sales of land we find a variegated pattern of intermediate stages, from small-holding peasant to big peasant proprietor, who has retained his old patrimony intact or even added to it. Where the middle peasant lives among small-holding peasants his interests and views will not differ greatly from theirs; he knows from his own experience how many of his kind have already sunk to the level of small peasants. But where middle and big peasants predominate and the operation of the farms requires, generally, the help of male and female servants it is quite a different matter. Of course a



workers' party has to fight, in the first place, on behalf of the wage-workers, that is, for the male and female servantry and the day labourers. It is unquestionably forbidden to make any promises to the peasants which include the continuance of the wage slavery of the workers. But as long as the big and middle peasants continue to exist as such they cannot manage without wage-workers. If it would, therefore, be down-right folly on our part to hold out prospects to be small-holding peasants of continuing permanently to be such, it would border on treason were we to promise the same to the big and middle peasants.

Written between November  
15 and 22, 1894

K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*  
in three volumes, Vol. 3, pp. 461-73

**Marx to Pavel Vasilyevich Annenkov**

December 28, 1846

...Mr Proudhon, chiefly because he doesn't know history, fails to see that, in developing his productive faculties, i.e. in living, man develops certain inter-relations, and that the nature of these relations necessarily changes with the modification and the growth of the said productive faculties. He fails to see that *economic categories* are but *abstractions* of those real relations, that they are truths only in so far as those relations continue to exist. Thus he falls into the error of bourgeois economists who regard those economic categories as eternal laws and not as historical laws which are laws only for a given historical development, a specific development of the productive forces. Thus, instead of regarding politico-economic categories as abstractions of actual social relations that are transitory and historical, Mr Proudhon, by a mystical inversion, sees in the real relations only the embodiment of those abstractions. Those abstractions are themselves formulas which have been slumbering in the bosom of God the Father since the beginning of the world.

But here our good Mr Proudhon falls prey to severe intellectual convulsions. If all these economic categories are emanations of God's heart, if they are the hidden and eternal life of man, how is it, first, that there is any development and, secondly, that Mr Proudhon is not a conservative? He explains these evident contradictions in terms of a whole system of antagonisms.

In order to explain this system of antagonisms, let us take an example.

*Monopoly* is good because it is an economic category, hence an emanation of God. Competition is good because it, too, is an economic category. But what is not good is the reality of monopoly and the reality of competition. And what is even worse is that monopoly and competition mutually devour each other. What is to be done about it? Because these two eternal thoughts of God contradict each other, it seems clear to him that, in God's bosom, there is likewise a synthesis of these two thoughts in which the evils of monopoly are balanced by competition and vice versa. The result of the struggle between the two ideas will be that only the good aspects will be thrown into relief. This secret idea need only be wrested from God and put into practice and all will be for the best; the synthetic formula concealed in the night of mankind's impersonal reason must be revealed. Mr Proudhon does not hesitate for a moment to act as revealer.

But take a brief glance at real life. In present-day economic life you will find, not only competition and monopoly, but also their synthesis, which is not a *formula* but a *movement*. Monopoly produces competition, competition produces monopoly. That equation, however, far from alleviating the difficulties of the present situation, as bourgeois economists suppose, gives rise to a situation even more difficult and involved. Thus, by changing the basis upon which the present economic relations rest, by abolishing the present *mode* of production, you abolish not only competition, monopoly and their antagonism, but also their unity, their synthesis, the movement whereby a true balance is maintained between competition and monopoly.

Let me now give you an example of Mr Proudhon's dialectics.

*Freedom* and *slavery* constitute an antagonism. There is no need for me to speak either of the good or of the bad aspects of freedom. As for slavery, there is no need for me to speak of its bad aspects. The only thing requiring explanation is the good side of slavery. I do not mean indirect slavery, the slavery of proletariat; I mean direct slavery, the slavery of the Blacks in Surinam, in Brazil, in the southern regions of North America.

Direct slavery is as much the pivot upon which our present-day industrialism turns as are machinery, credit, etc. Without slavery there would be no cotton, without cotton there would be no modern industry. It is slavery which has given value to the colonies, it is the colonies which have created world trade, and world trade is the necessary condition for large-scale machine industry. Consequently, prior to the slave trade, the colonies sent very few products to the Old World, and did not noticeably change the face of the world. Slavery is therefore an economic category of paramount importance. Without slavery, North America, the most progressive nation, would be transformed into a patriarchal country. Only wipe North America off the map and you will get anarchy, the complete decay of trade and modern civilisation. But to do away with slavery would be to wipe America off the map. Being an economic category, slavery has existed in all nations since the beginning of the world. All that modern nations have achieved is to disguise slavery at home and import it openly into the New World. After these reflections on slavery, what will the good Mr Proudhon do? He will seek the synthesis of liberty and slavery, the true golden mean, in other words the balance between slavery and liberty.

Mr Proudhon understands perfectly well that men manufacture worsted, linens and silks; and whatever credit is due for understanding such a trifle! What Mr Proudhon does not understand is that, according to their faculties, men also produce the *social relations* in which they produce worsted and linens. Still less does Mr Proudhon understand that those who produce social relations in conformity with their material productivity also produce the *ideas, categories*, i.e. the ideal abstract expressions of those same social relations. Indeed, the categories are no more eternal than the relations they express. They are historical and transitory products. To Mr Proudhon, on the contrary, the prime cause consists in abstractions and categories. According to him it is these and not men which make history. *The abstraction, the category regarded as such*, i.e. as distinct from man and his material activity, is, of course, immortal, immutable, impassive. It is nothing but an entity of

pure reason, which is only another way of saying that an abstraction, regarded as such, is abstract. An admirable *tautology*!

Hence, to Mr Proudhon, economic relations, seen in the form of categories, are eternal formulas without origin or progress.

To put it another way: Mr Proudhon does not directly assert that to him *bourgeois life* is an *eternal truth*; he says so indirectly, by deifying the categories which express bourgeois relations in the form of thought. He regards the products of bourgeois society as spontaneous entities, endowed with a life of their own, eternal, the moment these present themselves to him in the shape of categories, of thought. Thus he fails to rise above the bourgeois horizon. Because he operates with bourgeois thoughts and assumes them to be eternally true, he looks for the synthesis of those thoughts, their balance, and fails to see that their present manner of maintaining a balance is the only possible one.

In fact he does what all good bourgeois do. They all maintain that competition, monopoly, etc., are, in principle—i.e. regarded as abstract thoughts—the only basis for existence, but leave a great deal to be desired in practice. What they all want is competition without the pernicious consequences of competition. They all want the impossible, i.e. the conditions of bourgeois existence without the necessary consequences of those conditions. They all fail to understand that the bourgeois form of production is an historical and transitory form, just as was the feudal form. This mistake is due to the fact that, to them, bourgeois man is the only possible basis for any society, and that they cannot envisage a state of society in which man will have ceased to be bourgeois.

Hence Mr Proudhon is necessarily *doctrinaire*. The historical movement by which the present world is convulsed resolves itself, so far as he is concerned, into the problem of discovering the right balance, the synthesis of two bourgeois thoughts. Thus, by subtlety, the clever fellow discovers God's secret thought, the unity of two isolated thoughts which are isolated thoughts only because Mr Proudhon has isolated them from

practical life, from present-day production, which is the combination of the realities they express. In place of the great historical movement which is born of the conflict between the productive forces already acquired by man, and his social relations which no longer correspond to those productive forces, in the place of the terrible wars now imminent between the various classes of a nation and between the various nations, in place of practical and violent action on the part of the masses, which is alone capable of resolving those conflicts, in place of that movement—vast, prolonged and complex—Mr Proudhon puts the cacky-dauphin movement of his own mind. Thus it is the savants, the men able to filch from God his inmost thoughts, who make history. All the lesser fry have to do is put their revelations into practice.

Now you will understand why Mr Proudhon is the avowed enemy of all political movements. For him, the solution of present-day problems does not consist in public action but in the dialectical rotations of his brain. Because to him the categories are the motive force, it is not necessary to change practical life in order to change the categories; on the contrary, it is necessary to change the categories, whereupon actual society will change as a result.

In his desire to reconcile contradictions Mr Proudhon does not ask himself whether the very basis of those contradictions ought not to be subverted. He is exactly like the political doctrinaire who wants a king and a chamber of deputies and a chamber of peers as integral parts of social life, as eternal categories. Only he seeks a new formula with which to balance those powers (whose balance consists precisely in the actual movement in which one of those powers is now the conqueror now the slave of the other). In the eighteenth century, for instance, a whole lot of mediocre minds busied themselves with finding the true formula with which to maintain a balance between the social estates, the nobility, the king, the parliaments, etc., and the next day there was neither king, nor parliament, nor nobility. The proper balance between the aforesaid antagonisms consisted in the convulsion of all the social relations which served as a basis for those feudal entities

and for the antagonism between those feudal entities.

Because Mr Proudhon posits on the one hand eternal ideas, the categories of pure reason, and, on the other, man and his practical life which, according to him, is the practical application of these categories, you will find in him from the very outset a *dualism* between life and ideas, between soul and body—a dualism which recurs in many forms. So you now see that the said antagonism is nothing other than Mr Proudhon's inability to understand either the origin or the profane history of the categories he has deified.

My letter is already too long for me to mention the absurd case Mr Proudhon is conducting against communism. For the present you will concede that a man who has failed to understand the present state of society must be even less able to understand either the movement which tends to overturn it or the literary expression of that revolutionary movement.

The *only point* upon which I am in complete agreement with Mr Proudhon is the disgust he feels for socialist sentimentalising. I anticipated him in provoking considerable hostility by the ridicule I directed at ovine, sentimental, utopian socialism. But is not Mr Proudhon subject to strange delusions when he opposes his petty-bourgeois sentimentality, by which I mean his homilies about home, conjugal love and suchlike banalities, to socialist sentimentality which—as for instance in Fourier's case—is infinitely more profound than the presumptuous platitudes of our worthy Proudhon? He himself is so well aware of the emptiness of his reasoning, of his complete inability to discuss such things, that he indulges in tantrums, exclamations and *irae hominis prohi*,<sup>a</sup> that he fumes, curses, denounces, cries pestilence and infamy, thumps his chest and glorifies himself before God and man as being innocent of socialist infamies! It is not as a critic that he derides socialist sentimentalities, or what he takes to be sentimentalities. It is as a saint, a pope, that he excommunicates the poor sinners and sings the praises of the petty bourgeoisie and of the miserable patriarchal amorous illusions of the domestic hearth. Nor

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<sup>a</sup> The anger of an upright man.—*Ed.*

is this in any way fortuitous. Mr Proudhon is, from top to toe, a philosopher, an economist of the petty bourgeoisie. In an advanced society and because of his situation, a *petty bourgeois* becomes a socialist on the one hand, and economist on the other, i.e. he is dazzled by the magnificence of the upper middle classes and feels compassion for the sufferings of the people. He is at one and the same time bourgeois and man of the people. In his heart of hearts he prides himself on his impartiality, on having found the correct balance, allegedly distinct from the happy medium. A petty bourgeois of this kind deifies *contradiction*, for contradiction is the very basis of his being. He is nothing but social contradiction in action. He must justify by means of theory what he is in practice, and Mr Proudhon has the merit of being the scientific exponent of the French petty bourgeoisie, which is a real merit since the petty bourgeoisie will be an integral part of all the impending social revolutions.

With this letter I should have liked to send you my book on political economy,<sup>a</sup> but up till now I have been unable to have printed either this work or the critique of German philosophers and socialists<sup>b</sup> which I mentioned to you in Brussels. You would never believe what difficulties a publication of this kind runs into in Germany, on the one hand from the police, on the other from the booksellers, who are themselves the interested representatives of all those tendencies I attack. And as for our own party, not only is it poor, but there is a large faction in the German communist party which bears me a grudge because I am opposed to its utopias and its declaiming.

K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*,  
Vol. 38, 1982, pp. 100-05

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<sup>a</sup> Reference is to the *Kritik der Politik und National Ökonomie*, a work which Marx planned to write.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology* (K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 19-539).—Ed.



## Engels to Marx

October 7, 1858

...The Jones business is most distasteful. He held a meeting here and the speech he made was entirely in the spirit of the new alliance.<sup>109</sup> After that affair one might almost believe that the English proletarian movement in its old traditional Chart-ist form must perish utterly before it can evolve in a new and viable form. And yet it is not possible to foresee what the new form will look like. It seems to me, by the way, that here is in fact a connection between Jones' NEW MOVE, seen in conjunction with previous more or less successful attempts at such an alliance, and the fact that the English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that the ultimate aim of this most bourgeois of all nations would appear to be the possession, *alongside* the bourgeoisie, of a bourgeois aristocracy and bourgeois proletariat. In the case of a nation which exploits the entire world this is, of course, justified to some extent. Only a couple of thoroughly bad years might help here, but after the discoveries of gold these are no longer so easy to engineer. For the rest it is a complete mystery to me how the massive overproduction which caused the crisis has been absorbed; never before has such heavy flooding drained away so rapidly.

Reynolds will become a prominent personage thanks to Jones' manoeuvre; he is the only "educated" man (vulgo "scholar") who still poses as the representative of the proletariat—*au fond* he is as bourgeois as Monsieur Jones has now become, though in a different way. ...

K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*,  
Vol. 40, 1983, p. 344

## Marx to Engels

April 9, 1863

...He<sup>a</sup> sent me his open *Letter in Reply* to the Central Workers' Committee for the Leipzig Workers' (read *crafts-men's*) Congress. He behaves—importantly bandying about phrases he borrowed from us—altogether like a future labour dictator. Settling the problem of wage labour and capital is (literally) “child's play” to him. The workers simply have to agitate in favour of *universal suffrage* and then send people like him equipped “with the bright weapon of science” to the Chamber of Deputies. Then they will form workers' factories the capital for which will be advanced by the *state* and these establishments will by and by embrace the entire land. This at any rate is surprisingly new!...

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 130-31

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<sup>a</sup> Ferdinand Lassalle.—*Ed.*

## Marx to Johann Baptist von Schweitzer

February 13, 1865

...Combinations and the trades unions springing from them are not only of the utmost importance as means of organising the working class for struggle against the bourgeoisie (this importance is shown, incidentally, in the fact that even the workers of the United States, in spite of the vote and the republic, cannot do without them), but in Prussia, and in Germany in general, the right of combination is moreover a breach of the police state and bureaucracy, tears the Master and Servant Order and aristocratic lording it on the land to bits, in short, is a measure for making the "subjects" the majority, which the Progressive Party,<sup>110</sup> i. e. any middle class opposition party in Prussia, if it isn't crazy, can agree to a hundred times sooner than the Prussian Government, let alone the government of a Bismarck! On the other hand, the Royal Prussian Government's backing of co-operative societies (and everyone who knows the Prussian conditions also knows in advance its inevitably dwarfish scale) is nil as an economic measure, while it is ample at the same time, through the tutelage system, to buy off a part of the working class and castrate the movement. Just as the middle class party in Prussia has compromised itself especially in that way, and brought about its present *misère*,<sup>a</sup> earnestly believing that the Government has fallen into its lap<sup>111</sup> with the "New Age", by grace of the Prince Regent, so the workers' party will compromise itself even more if it imagines the golden apples will fall into its

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<sup>a</sup> Misery, wretchedness.—*Ed.*

mouth through the Bismarck era or any other Prussian era, through the King's grace. Disillusionment will come beyond all doubt over Lassalle's wretched illusion of a socialist intervention of a Prussian government. The logic of things will tell. But the *honour* of the workers' party demands that it reject such illusions, even before their hollowness is punctured by experience. Either the working class is revolutionary or it is nothing.

Translated from the German

## Marx to Engels

August 26, 1868

...The invitation which I received to the Congress of the General Association of German Workers (Hamburg, August 22 to 25) was signed by Schweitzer as President and by more than twenty workers from various parts of Germany (members of the *Executive*). I had to take the latter into consideration in my reply.<sup>a</sup> The reason I gave for not coming was the work of the Central Council of the International Working Men's Association, and I said I was glad to see that the starting points of any "serious" working-class movement—agitation for full political freedom, regulation of the working day and international co-operation of the working class—were emphasised in their *programme* for the Congress. That is, in other words, I congratulated them on having given up *Lassalle's programme*....

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
p. 198

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<sup>a</sup> To the president and the Executive Committee of the General Association of German Workers.—*Ed.*

## Marx to Engels

September 19, 1868

...You will see from the debates (in *Social-Demokrat*<sup>112</sup>) of the Congress of the General Association of German Workers that the "real" Lassalleans suspected that, with a possible Congress for founding trades unions and settling strikes,<sup>113</sup> their Herr President<sup>a</sup> was abandoning the Lassallean line. Only by a threat to resign did he get leave to undertake this propaganda, independently of the General Association. His aim, naturally, was to forestall Liebknecht, etc. He appreciated, moreover, that with the development of a *real* workers' organisation in Germany based on trades unions, his artificial sectarian association would soon be nowhere. What he now describes as the pinnacle of Lassallean invention in a leader (No. 104), i.e. "public loans for founding productive associations", is a literal crib from the programme of French *Catholic* socialism, *duce*<sup>b</sup> Buchez, in the *Atelier* of the time of Louis Philippe....

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> Johann Baptist von Schweitzer.—*Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> Led by.—*Ed.*

## Marx to Johann Baptist von Schweitzer

October 13, 1868

...To begin with, as far as the Lassallean Association is concerned, it was founded in a period of reaction. Lassalle—and this remains his immortal service—re-awakened the workers' movement in Germany after its fifteen years of slumber. But he committed great mistakes. He allowed himself to be governed too much by the immediate circumstances of the time. He made a minor starting point—his opposition to a dwarf like Schulze-Delitzsch—into the central point of his agitation—state aid versus self-help. In so doing he merely took up again the watchword which *Buchez*, the leader of French *Catholic* socialism, had given out in 1843 seqq. against the genuine workers' movement in France. Much too intelligent to regard this watchword as anything but a temporary makeshift, Lassalle could only justify it on the ground of its (alleged!) immediate practicability. For this purpose he had to assert that it could be carried out in the *near* future. The "State" was consequently transformed into the Prussian State. Thus he was driven into making concessions to the Prussian monarchy, the Prussian reaction (feudal party) and even the clericals. With *Buchez's* state aid for associations he combined the Chartist cry of universal suffrage. He overlooked the fact that conditions in Germany and England were different. He overlooked the lessons of the *bas empire*<sup>\*</sup> with regard to universal suffrage in France. Moreover, like everyone who maintains that he has a panacea for the sufferings of the masses in his pocket, he

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<sup>\*</sup> A reference to the Second Empire in France.—*Ed.*

gave his agitation from the outset a religious and sectarian character. Every sect is in fact religious. Furthermore, just because he was the founder of a sect, he denied all natural connection with the earlier working-class movement both inside Germany and abroad. He fell into the same mistake as Proudhon: instead of looking among the genuine elements of the class movement for the real basis of his agitation, he wanted to prescribe the course to be followed by this movement according to a certain doctrinaire recipe....

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 200-01



## Marx to John Ludlow

April 10, 1869

Dear Sir,

Being aware of your services to the working class, I should before this have given myself the pleasure of sending you my last work: *Das Kapital* (2nd and 3d vls. not yet published), if I had known you to be a German reader.

In your article on Lassalle in the *Fortnightly*<sup>a 114</sup> you say first that Lassalle propagated my principles in Germany and say then that I am propagating "Lassallean principles" in England. This would indeed be what the French call "*un échange de bons procédés*".<sup>b</sup>

In volume I I send you, you will find Preface, p. VIII, nt. I the plain facts stated viz. that "Lassalle has taken from my writings almost literally *all his general theoretical developments*", but that I "have nothing whatever to do with *his practical applications*".<sup>c</sup> His practical nostrum, government aid to co-operative societies, I call by courtesy *his*. It belongs in fact to, and was zealously preached, at the time of Louis Philippe, by *Monsieur Buchez*, Ex-St. Simonien, author of the *Histoire Parlementaire de la Révol[ution] Franç[aise]*, glorifying Robespierre and the Holy Inquisition. M. Buchez put forward his views, f.i. in the journal *L'Atelier*, in *opposition* to the radical views of <what be called communism> the French communism of that time.

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<sup>a</sup> John Ludlow, *Ferdinand Lassalle, the German Social-Democrat*.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> An exchange of favours.—Ed.

<sup>c</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 18-19, note 1.—Ed.

Since you quote my reply to Proudhon: "*Misère de la Philosophie*" you cannot but be aware from its last chapter that in 1847, when all the political economists and all the socialists concurred on one single point—the condemnation of *Trades' Unions*, I demonstrated their historical necessity.

Yours truly  
*Karl Marx*

Printed according to the original

## Marx to Laura and Paul Lafargue

July 28, 1870

...As to the English workmen, they hate Bonaparte more than Bismarck, principally because he is the aggressor. At the same time they say: "The plague on both your houses",\* and if the English oligarchy, as it seems very inclined, should take part in the war against France, there will be a "tuck" at London. For my own part, I do everything in my power, through the means of the *International*, to stimulate this "Neutrality" spirit and to baffle the "*paid*" (paid by the "respectables") leaders of the English working-class who strain every nerve to mislead them...

Printed according to the original

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\* Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act III, Scene 1.—*Ed.*

## Engels to Adolf Hepner

December 30, 1872

...Of the two articles on the "Resumption of the Reform Movement", the first is good, but the second is in direct contradiction to the facts.<sup>115</sup> The many small lousy congresses, which are taken seriously there solely because they are taken seriously by the *Bee-Hive*,<sup>116</sup> which is in the pay of the bourgeoisie, have no other purpose than to prepare the forthcoming Parliamentary elections. All the reform societies enumerated there are totally insignificant and, moreover, mostly consist of *one and the same persons*. And what sort of persons? With a few exceptions, precisely of the kind of labour leaders that Marx branded as mercenary in The Hague.<sup>a</sup> It is impossible, from there, to judge the labour movement here on the basis of the *Bee-Hive* and *Reynolds's*. Even though a few trades unionists take part in such congresses, the trades unions have no thought at all of becoming political; nor *could* they—at least most of them, including the biggest—do so without totally reshaping their Rules [...] <sup>b</sup> reality the movement here is lousier than ever and, what with the prosperity of industry, one cannot expect things to be different....

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> Minutes of Marx's speech on Barry's mandate.—*Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> The manuscript is damaged here.—*Ed.*

## Engels to August Bebel

June 20, 1873

...With regard to the attitude of the Party towards Lassalleism, you of course can judge better than we what tactics should be adopted, especially in particular cases. But there is also this to be considered. When, as in your case, one is to a certain extent in the position of a competitor to the General Association of German Workers, one can easily be too considerate of one's rivals and gets into the habit of always thinking of them first. But both the General Association of German Workers and the Social-Democratic Workers' Party together still form only a very small minority of the German working class. Our view, which we have found confirmed by long practice, is that the correct tactics in propaganda are not to entice away a few individuals and local groups here and there from one's opponent, but to work on the great mass, which is not yet taking part in the movement. A single individual whom one has oneself reared from the raw is worth more than ten Lassallean turncoats, who always bring the germs of their false tendencies into the Party with them. And if one could get only the masses without their *local leaders* it would still be all right. But in fact one must always take along a whole crowd of these leaders into the bargain, who are bound by their previous public utterances, if not by their previous views, and who must now prove above all things that they have not deserted their principles but that on the contrary the Social-Democratic Workers' Party preaches *true* Lassalleanism. This was the unfortunate thing at Eisenach, which perhaps could not be avoided at that time, but these elements have

certainly done harm to the Party and I am not sure that the Party would not have been at least as strong today without that accession. In any case, however, I should regard it as a misfortune if these elements were to receive reinforcements.

One must not allow oneself to be misled by the cry for "unity". Those who have this word most often on their lips are the ones who cause most of the discord, just as at present the Jura Bakuninists in Switzerland, who have provoked all the splits, clamour for nothing so much as for unity. These unity fanatics are either narrow-minded people who want to stir everything into one non-descript brew, which, the moment it is left to settle, throws up the differences again but in much sharper contrast because they will then be all in one pot (in Germany you have a fine example of this in the people who preach reconciliation of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie)—or else they are people who unconsciously (like Mülberger, for instance) or consciously want to adulterate the movement. It is for this reason that the biggest sectarians and the biggest brawlers and rogues shout loudest for unity at certain times. Nobody in our lifetime has given us more trouble and has caused more quarrels than the shouters for unity.

Naturally every party leadership wants to see successes, and this is quite a good thing. But there are circumstances in which one must have the courage to sacrifice *momentary* success for more important things. Especially for a party like ours, whose ultimate success is so absolutely certain, and which has developed so enormously in our own lifetime and before our own eyes, momentary success is by no means always and absolutely necessary. Take the International, for instance. After the Commune it had a colossal success. The bruised and shattered bourgeoisie ascribed omnipotence to it. The great mass of the membership believed things would stay like that for all eternity. We knew very well that the bubble *must* burst. All riff-raff attached themselves to it. The sectarians within it became arrogant and misused the International in the hope that they would be allowed to commit the greatest stupidities and vulgarities. We could not put up with that. Knowing very well that the bubble must burst some time it was for us

not a matter of delaying the catastrophe but taking care that the International emerged from it pure and unadulterated. The bubble burst at the Hague and you know that the majority of the Congress members went home sick with disappointment. And yet nearly all these disappointed people, who imagined they would find the ideal of universal brotherhood and reconciliation in the International, had far more bitter quarrels at home than those which broke out at the Hague. Now the sectarian quarrel-mongers are preaching reconciliation and decrying us as being cantankerous and dictators. And if we had come out in a conciliatory way at the Hague, if we had hushed up the breaking out of the split—what would have been the result? The sectarians, especially the Bakuninists, would have had another year in which to perpetrate, in the name of the International, still greater stupidities and infamies; the workers of the most developed countries would have turned away in disgust; the bubble would not have burst but, pierced by pinpricks, would have slowly collapsed, and the next Congress, which would have been bound to bring the crisis after all, would have turned into the most sordid personal row, because *principles* would already have been abandoned at the Hague. Then the International would indeed have gone to pieces—gone to pieces through “unity”! Instead of this we have now got rid of the rotten elements with honour to ourselves—the members of the Commune who were present at the last and decisive session say that no session of the Commune left such a terrible impression upon them as this judicial session dealing with the traitors to the European proletariat. For ten months we let them expend all their energies on lies, slander and intrigue—and where are they? They, the alleged representatives of the great majority of the International, now themselves announce that they do not dare to come to the next Congress. (An article which is being sent off to the *Volkstaat* simultaneously with this letter contains further details.<sup>a</sup>) And if we had to do it again we should on

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<sup>a</sup> F. Engels, *News from the International* (see present edition, p. 113).—Ed.

the whole not act any differently – tactical mistakes are always made, of course.

In any case, I think the efficient elements among the Lassalleans will in due course join you of their own accord and it would, therefore, be unwise to break off the fruit before it is ripe, as the unity crowd wants to.

Moreover, even old Hegel said: A party proves itself victorious by *splitting* and being able to stand the split.<sup>a</sup> The movement of the proletariat is bound to pass through various stages of development; at every stage part of the people get stuck and do not join in the further advance; and even this alone is sufficient to explain why the “solidarity of the proletariat” is in reality everywhere being realised in different party groupings, which carry on life-and-death feuds with one another, as the Christian sects in the Roman Empire did amidst the worst persecutions.

If the *Neuer Social-Demokrat*<sup>117</sup> for example has more subscribers than the *Volksstaat*, you ought not to forget either that each *sect* is necessarily fanatic and through this fanaticism obtains, particularly in regions where it is new (as for instance the General Association of German Workers is in Schleswig-Holstein), much greater momentary successes than the Party, which simply represents the real movement, without any sectarian oddities. But on the other hand, fanaticism does not last long....

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 265-68

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<sup>a</sup> G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*.—Ed.



## Engels to August Bebel<sup>118</sup>

March 18-28, 1875

...You ask me what we think of the unification business. Unfortunately we have fared the same as you. Neither Liebknecht nor anyone else has sent us any information and we too, therefore, know only what is in the papers, and there was nothing in them until the draft programme appeared about a week ago! This draft has certainly astonished us not a little.

Our Party has so frequently made offers of reconciliation or at least of co-operation to the Lassalleans and has been so frequently and disdainfully repulsed by the Hasenclevers, Hasselmanns, and Tölckes that any child must have drawn the conclusion: if these gentlemen are now coming and offering reconciliation themselves they must be in a damned tight fix. But in view of the well-known character of these people it is our duty to utilise their fix in order to stipulate for every possible guarantee, so that they do not re-establish their shaken position in the opinion of the workers at the expense of our Party. They ought to have been received with extreme coolness and mistrust, and union made dependent on the extent to which they were willing to drop their sectarian slogans and their state aid and to accept in its essentials the Eisenach programme of 1869<sup>119</sup> or a revised edition of it appropriate to the present moment. Our Party has *absolutely nothing to learn* from the Lassalleans in the theoretical sphere and therefore in what is decisive for the programme, but the Lassalleans certainly have something to learn from our Party; the first condition of union ought to have been that they cease to be sectarians, Lassalleans, and hence that above all the universal panacea of

state aid should be, if not entirely relinquished, at any rate recognised by them as a subordinate transitional measure, one among and alongside of many other possible ones. The draft programme shows that our people are a hundred times superior theoretically to the Lassallean leaders—but to the same extent inferior to them in political cunning; the “honest”<sup>a</sup> have been once more cruelly cheated by the dishonest.

In the first place Lassalle’s high-sounding but historically false phrase is accepted: in relation to the working class all other classes are only one reactionary mass. This proposition is true only in a few exceptional cases: for instance, in a revolution of the proletariat, like the Commune, or in a country where not only the bourgeoisie has moulded state and society in its own image but where in its wake the democratic petty bourgeoisie, too, has already carried out this remoulding down to its final consequences. If in Germany, for instance, the democratic petty bourgeoisie belonged to this reactionary mass, how could the Social-Democratic Workers’ Party have gone hand in hand with it—with the People’s Party<sup>120</sup>—for years? How can the *Volksstaat* take almost the whole of its political contents from the petty-bourgeois-democratic *Frankfurter Zeitung*<sup>121</sup>? And how comes it that no less than seven demands are included in this programme which directly and literally coincide with the programme of the People’s Party and the petty-bourgeois democracy? I mean the seven political demands, 1 to 5 and 1 to 2, of which there is not a single one that is not *bourgeois-democratic*.

Secondly, the principle that the workers’ movement is an international movement is, to all intents and purposes, completely disavowed for the present day, and at that by people who have upheld this principle most gloriously for five whole years under the most difficult conditions. The German workers’ position at the head of the European movement is *essentially* due to their genuinely international attitude during the war; no other proletariat would have behaved so well. And now this principle is to be disavowed by them at the

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<sup>a</sup> The Eisenachers.—*Ed.*

very moment when the workers everywhere abroad are emphasising it in the same degree as the governments are striving to suppress every attempted manifestation of it in any organisation! And which single aspect is left of the internationalism of the workers' movement? The faint prospect—not even of a future co-operation of the European workers for their emancipation—no, but of a future “international brotherhood of peoples”, of the “United States of Europe” of the bourgeois of the Peace League!<sup>122</sup>

It was of course not necessary to speak of the International as such. But surely the very least would have been to make no retreat from the programme of 1869 and to say something like this: *although, to begin with*, the German workers' party is operating within the existing state boundaries (it has no right to speak in the name of the European proletariat and especially no right to say something false), it is conscious of its solidarity with the workers of all countries and will always continue to be ready, as it has been hitherto, to fulfil the obligations imposed upon it by this solidarity. Obligations of that kind exist even without directly proclaiming or regarding oneself as a part of the International; for instance, help and abstention from blacklegging in strikes; care taken that the Party organs keep the German workers informed about the movement abroad; agitation against the threat or the outbreak of dynastic wars, and during such wars behaviour similar to that shown in an exemplary way in 1870 and 1871, etc.

Thirdly, our people have allowed the Lassallean “iron law of wages” to be foisted upon them, a law based on a quite antiquated economic view, namely, that the worker receives on the average only a *minimum* wage, because, according to Malthus' theory of population, there are always too many workers (this was Lassalle's argument). Now Marx has proved in detail in *Capital* that the laws regulating wages are very complicated, that sometimes one predominates and sometimes another, according to circumstances, that therefore they are in no sense iron but on the contrary very elastic, and that the matter can by no means be dismissed in a few words, as Lassalle imagined. The Malthusian argument in support of the

law, which Lassalle copied from Malthus and Ricardo (distorting the proposition of the latter), as it is to be found, for instance, in the *Arbeiterlesebuch*, page 5, quoted from another pamphlet of Lassalle's has been refuted in detail by Marx in the section on the "Accumulation of Capital".<sup>a</sup> Thus by adopting Lassalle's "iron law" we commit ourselves to a false thesis with a false substantiation.

Fourthly, the programme puts forward as its *sole social demand*—Lassalle's state aid in its most naked form, as Lassalle stole it from Buchez. And this after Bracke has very well exposed the utter futility of this demand and after almost all, if not all, our Party speakers have been obliged to come out against this "state assistance" in fighting the Lassalleans! Lower than this our Party could not humiliate itself. Internationalism brought down to Amand Gögg and socialism to the bourgeois republican Buchez, who put forward this demand *in opposition to the Socialists*, in order to outdo them!

At best, however, "state assistance" in the Lassallean sense is only a *single* measure among many others designed to attain the end here lamely described as "paving the way to the solution of the social question"—as if a theoretically *unsolved* social question still existed for us! So if one says: the German workers' party strives for the abolition of wage labour, and with it of class distinctions, by the establishment of co-operative production in industry and agriculture and on a national scale; it supports every measure appropriate for the attainment of this end!—then no Lassallean can have anything against it.

Fifthly, there is not a word about the organisation of the working class as a class by means of the trade unions. And that is a very essential point, for this is the real class organisation of the proletariat, in which it wages its daily struggles with capital, in which it trains itself, and which nowadays even amid the worst reaction (as in Paris at present) can simply no longer be smashed. Considering the importance which this organisation has attained also in Germany, it is

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<sup>a</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 531-666.—Ed.

absolutely necessary in our opinion to mention it in the programme and if possible to leave open a place for it in the Party organisation.

All this has been done by our people to please the Lassalleans. And what has the other side conceded? That a lot of rather confused *purely democratic demands* should figure in the programme, of which several are a mere matter of fashion, as for instance, the "legislation by the people" which exists in Switzerland and does more harm than good if it does anything at all. *Administration* by the people, that would be something. Equally lacking is the first condition of all freedom: that all officials should be responsible for all their official acts to every citizen before the ordinary courts and according to common law. Of the fact that such demands as freedom of science and freedom of conscience figure in every liberal bourgeois programme and appear somewhat strange here, I shall say nothing more.

The free people's state is transformed into the free state. Taken in its grammatical sense, a free state is one where the state is free in relation to its citizens, hence a state with a despotic government. The whole talk about the state should be dropped, especially since the Commune, which was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word. The "*people's state*" has been thrown in our faces *ad nauseam* by the Anarchists, although already Marx's book against Proudhon and later the *Communist Manifesto* directly declare that with the introduction of the socialist order of society the state will dissolve of itself and disappear.\* Since the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, during the revolution, to hold down one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a free people's state: so long as the proletariat still *uses* the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist.

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\* K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*; K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 105-212, (477-519).—Ed.

We would therefore propose to replace *state* everywhere by *Gemeinwesen* [community], a good old German word which can very well convey the meaning of the French word "*commune*".

"The elimination of all social and political inequality" is also a very questionable phrase in place of "the abolition of all class distinctions". Between one country and another, one province and another and even one locality and another there will always exist a *certain* inequality in the conditions of life, which it will be possible to reduce to a minimum but never entirely eliminate. Alpine dwellers will always have different conditions of life from those of people living on plains. The idea of socialist society as the realm of *equality* is a one-sided French idea modelled upon the old "liberty, equality, fraternity"—a concept which was justified as a *stage of development* in its own time and place but which, like all the one-sided ideas of the earlier socialist schools, should have been overcome by now, for it only produces confusion in people's heads and more precise modes of presentation of the matter have been found.

I shall stop, although almost every word in this programme, which has, moreover, been composed in an incipid and flaccid style, could be criticised. It is of such a character that if adopted Marx and I shall *never* be able to give our adherence to the *new* party established on this basis, and shall have very seriously to consider what our attitude towards it—in public as well—should be. You must remember that abroad *we* are made responsible for any and every utterance and action of the German Social-Democratic Workers' Party, for instance, by Bakunin in his work *State and Anarchy*, where we have to answer for every thoughtless word spoken or written by Liebknecht since the *Demokratisches Wochenblatt*<sup>123</sup> was started. People imagine that we run the whole show from here, while you know as well as I that we have hardly ever interfered in any way in internal Party affairs, and when we did then only in order to make good, as far as possible, blunders, and *only theoretical* blunders at that, which were in our opinion committed. But you yourself will realise

that this programme marks a turning point which may very easily compel us to refuse any and every responsibility for the party which accepts it.

In general, the official programme of a party is of less importance than what the party does. But a *new* programme is after all a banner publicly raised, and the outside world judges the party by it. It should, therefore, on no account take a step backwards, as this one does in comparison with the Eisenach programme. One should also take into consideration what the workers of other countries will say to this programme, what impression will be produced by this bending of the knee to Lassalleanism on the part of the whole German socialist proletariat.

I am convinced moreover that a union on *this* basis will not last a year. Are the best minds in our Party to lend themselves to grinding out repetitions, learnt by rote, of the Lassalleian precepts on the iron law of wages and state aid? I should like to see you doing it, for instance! And if they did do this they would be hissed down by their audiences. And I am sure the Lassalleans will insist on just *these* points of the programme like the Jew Shylock on his pound of flesh.\* The separation will come; but we shall have made Hasselmann, Hasenclever, Tölcke and Co. "honest" again; we shall come out of the separation weaker and the Lassalleans stronger; our Party will have lost its political virginity and will never again be able to come out wholeheartedly against the Lassalleian phrases which it had inscribed for a time on its own banner; and if the Lassalleans then once more say that they are the most genuine, the only workers' party, whereas our people are bourgeois, the programme will be there to prove it. All the socialist measures in it are *theirs*, and all *our* Party has put into it are the demands of the petty-bourgeois democracy, which is nevertheless described *also by it* in the same programme as a part of the "reactionary mass".

I had let this letter lie here as you will be set free only on April 1, in honour of Bismarck's birthday, and I did not want

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\* Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act I, Scene 3.—Ed.

to run the risk of its being intercepted in any attempt to smuggle it in. And now a letter has just arrived from Bracke, who has also his grave doubts about the programme and wants to know our opinion. I am therefore sending this letter to him to be forwarded, so that he can read it and I need not write all this stuff once more. By the way, I have also told the unvarnished truth to Ramm; to Liebknecht I wrote only briefly. I cannot forgive him for *never* telling us a *single word* about the whole thing (while Ramm and others thought he had given us exact information) until it was too late, so to speak. It is true that he has always done this—hence the large amount of disagreeable correspondence which we, both Marx and I, have had with him; but this time it is really too bad and *we are certainly not going along with him....*

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 272-77



## Marx to Friedrich Adolph Sorge

October 19, 1877

...A rotten spirit is making itself felt in our Party in Germany, not so much among the masses as among the leaders (upper class and "workers"). The compromise with the Lassalleans has led to a compromise with other halfway elements too: in Berlin (via *Most*) with Dühring and his "admirers", and moreover with a whole gang of half-mature students and super-wise Doctors of Philosophy who want to give socialism a "superior, idealistic" orientation, that is to say, to replace its materialistic basis (which demands serious objective study from anyone who tries to use it) by modern mythology with its goddesses of Justice, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Dr. Höchberg, who publishes the *Zukunft*,<sup>124</sup> is a representative of this tendency and has "bought his way" into the Party—with the "noblest" intentions, I assume, but I do not give a damn for "intentions". Anything more miserable than his programme of the *Zukunft* has seldom seen the light of day with more "modest presumption".

The workers themselves, when, like Mr. Most and Co., they give up work and become *professional literary men*, always cause "theoretical" mischief and are always ready to join muddle-heads from the allegedly "learned" casts. *Utopian* socialism which for decades we have been clearing out of the German workers' heads with so much effort and labour—and it is their freedom from it which has made them theoretically (and therefore also practically) superior to the French and English—*utopian* socialism, playing with fantastic pictures of the future structure of society, is again rampant, and in a much more

futile form, not only compared with the great French and English utopians, but even with – Weitling. It is natural that utopian theories, which *before* the era of materialistic critical socialism contained the rudiments of the latter within itself, can now, coming belatedly, only be silly, stale, and basically reactionary....

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Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 290-91

## Engels to August Bebel

August 4, 1879

Dear Bebel,

Since my last of July 25 Hirsch has informed us of his correspondence with Bernstein and Liebknecht about the new paper.<sup>a</sup> Things are accordingly, therefore, very different from what we were entitled to suppose after your letter.

Since Hirsch has received no other answer from Liebknecht to his very justified questions about the arrangements made and the people who, on the one hand, will finance the paper and, on the other hand, manage it, than "the Party plus Höchberg" and the repeated assurance that everything was in order—we must therefore take it from this that the paper will be financed by Höchberg and that the "we" to whom, according to E. Bernstein's letter, "the production and supervision" are entrusted, are the said Höchberg and his secretary Bernstein.

From Bernstein's second letter to Hirsch, just received, it follows that this is how in fact matters stand.

It will now not have escaped you that the mistakes I warned about in my last, will now almost inevitably be inherent in the paper. Höchberg has proved himself, theoretically, an addlepate of the highest order and to be inspired in practice by an eagerness to fraternise with all and sundry who do not even pretend to be socialist but just *social*. He showed his nature in *Zukunft*, and compromised the Party in theory and in practice.

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<sup>a</sup> *Sozialdemokrat*.—Ed.

The Party above all needs a *political* organ. And Höchberg is really, at best, a quite unpolitical man, not even a *Social-Democrat* but a social *philanthropist*. And according to Bernstein's letter the paper *will not be political at all* but socialist in principle, i. e. inevitably social-fantastic in such hands, a continuation of *Zukunft*. Such a paper will represent the Party only when the latter is reduced to the tail of Höchberg and his Katheder-socialist friends. If the Party leaders want to put the proletariat under the leadership of Höchberg and his muzzy friends that way, the workers will hardly join them; a split and disorganisation will be inevitable; and Most and the local brawlers will have a great triumph.

In these circumstances, which we were quite ignorant about when I wrote my last letter, we find that Hirsch is quite right when he wants to have no part in the business. That goes for Marx and me. Our promise to collaborate applied to a real Party organ, and therefore could only be held valid for such, and not for a private paper of Herr Höchberg masquerading as a Party organ. We shall not, in any circumstances, collaborate with it. Marx and I therefore ask you expressly to see to it, without fail, that we are not mentioned as contributors.

Translated from the German

## Engels to Johann Philipp Becker

September 8, 1879

...An official Party organ<sup>a</sup> is to be founded in Zurich and the leadership—under the supreme control of the Leipzigers—will be in the hands of the Zurich Germans,<sup>b</sup> who I cannot say inspire me with confidence. In any case, there are quite curious things in the social sciences *Jahrbuch*<sup>125</sup> published by Höchberg, who is one of them: that the Party has been wrong in presenting itself as a workers party and has drawn the Anti-Socialist Law down on itself through *needless attacks* on the *bourgeoisie*; that it is not a matter of revolution but of a *long, peaceful evolution*, etc. This cowardly nonsense is naturally grist to Most's mill, and he has been quick to exploit what was at hand, as you will see from the latest Nos. of *Freiheit*.<sup>126</sup> They invited us from Leipzig to contribute to the new organ, and we accepted, but since learning who the immediate leaders will be, we have again refused, and since this *Jahrbuch* have quite given up all traffic with the people who want to smuggle this nonsense and these arselickers into the Party, with Höchberg and company. The Leipzigers will soon realise what they have taken on as allies. It will soon be time to come out against the philanthropic upper and lower middle class types, students and professors, who are penetrating the German Party and want to dilute the proletariat's class struggle against its oppressors into a universal human brotherhood organisation, and that at a time when the bourgeois with whom they want us to fraternise have declared us outside the law, smashed our press, dispersed our meetings, and handed us over *sans phrase*<sup>c</sup> to police tyranny. German workers will hardly co-operate with this kind of campaign....

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> *Sozialdemokrat*.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> See present edition, pp. 242-43.—Ed.

<sup>c</sup> Straight out.—Ed.

## Engels to Marx

September 9, 1879

...Herewith something from Liebknecht together with enclosures, from which there is not much new to be gathered, which is why I did not hurry to send them to you. For obvious reasons I have not told Hirsch about the whole of this lot: a useless brawl is best avoided.

Höchberg wrote to Hirsch from Scheveningen to get some sort of invitation here from him and a guarantee of a good reception, to which Hirsch didn't reply at all. To a further postcard of Höchberg's Hirsch sent a ditto: that you have not yet returned and that he himself, Hirsch, was also about to leave for the seaside. So we shall likely have peace from the man.

In the meantime it would still be best if you sent the documents back to me. I shall really have finally to answer Bebel 1) because of Hirsch, who would gladly have his personal involvement vis-à-vis Bebel explained and is becoming rather restive; and 2) because the *Jahrbuch* that Kowalewski brought you fortunately lets us give the reasons simply and definitely to the people why we absolutely cannot contribute to an organ in which Höchberg has the slightest say. The articles in question are:

1. "The Socialist Movement in Germany in Retrospect" by \* \* Höchberg and probably Bernstein and Lübeck),
2. C. L.'s (Lübeck's) reviews, especially of *Cohn's What Is Socialism?*, the conclusion,
3. M. Sch.'s report No. 1 from Germany (Max Schlesinger in Breslau).

Höchberg declares straight out that the Germans made a mistake in reducing the socialist movement to a mere *labour* movement and brought the Anti-Socialist Law down on themselves by *needless provocation* of the bourgeoisie! The move-

ment should be brought under the leadership of middle class and educated elements, take on a thoroughly peaceful reform character, etc. You can imagine with what gusto Most falls upon this miserable stuff and again presents himself as the genuine representative of the German movement.

Enfin,<sup>a</sup> I believe you too are of the opinion that after this story it will be best to establish our standpoint at least vis-à-vis the Leipzigers. If the new Party organ<sup>b</sup> blows Höchberg's horn, we shall perhaps have to do this openly.

When you send me the things (I have another copy of the *Jahrbuch* here), I'll draft a letter to Bebel and send it to you. You naturally need not let these trifles interrupt your holiday. But something must be done soon, otherwise Hirsch will write private letters everywhere again and give the thing a much too exclusively personal character....

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> Finally. - *Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> *Sozialdemokrat.* - *Ed.*

## Engels to Johann Philipp Becker

September 15, 1879

...Things are becoming continuously messier with the German Party organ<sup>a</sup> in Zurich. The Zurich editorial commission which is to control and censure the paper under the supreme direction of the Leipzigers, consists of Höchberg, Schramm, and Bernstein. It was Schramm, Höchberg, and Bernstein who concocted an article "The Socialist Movement in Germany in Retrospect" in the *Jahrbuch für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, which puts all three down as quite ordinary bourgeois, peaceful philanthropists; they accuse the Party of having been an exclusive "labour party" and having provoked the hatred of the bourgeoisie, and claim leadership of the movement for "cultured" bourgeois of their breed. That's really too much.

Fortunately, Höchberg suddenly arrived here<sup>b</sup> out of the blue the day before yesterday. I didn't mince matters with him. The poor lad, *au fond*<sup>c</sup> a good chap but frightfully naïf, was thunderstruck when I explained to him that we could not dream of dropping the proletarian banner that we had upheld for nearly 40 years, and could just as little join in the general lower middle class fraternisation dope that we had likewise now been fighting for almost 40 years. In short he now finally knows where he is with us, and why we cannot march with people like him, whatever the Leipzigers may do and say.

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<sup>a</sup> *Sozialdemokrat*.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> In London.—Tr.

<sup>c</sup> At bottom.—Ed.



We shall also make a quite categorical statement of our standpoint to Bebel vis-à-vis these allies of the German Party,<sup>a</sup> and then see what they do. If the Party organ<sup>b</sup> appears in the sense of this bourgeois article, we ourselves shall come out openly against it. They will probably not, however, let things come to that....

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> See next letter.—*Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> *Sozialdemokrat*.—*Ed.*

**Marx and Engels to August Bebel,  
Wilhelm Liebknecht, Wilhelm Bracke  
and Others**

(Circular Letter)<sup>127</sup>

Dear Bebel,

[September 17-18, 1879]

The reply to your letter of August 20 has been held up on the one hand by Marx's prolonged absence, and then by several incidents: first the arrival of Richter's *Jahrbuch*, and then that of Hirsch himself.

I must conclude from your letter that Liebknecht did not show you my last letter to him, though I specifically charged him to do so. Otherwise you would surely not have given me the same arguments as Liebknecht used and to which I had already *replied* in that letter.

Now let us go over the separate points concerned here.

**I. The Negotiations with C. Hirsch**

Liebknecht asks Hirsch if he will take on the editing of the Party organ to be founded in Zurich.<sup>a</sup> Hirsch wants information about the financing of the paper; what funds are available, and who provides them. The first in order to know whether the paper will not fold up within a couple of months. The other in order to ascertain who holds the purse strings and so has final control over the paper's position. Liebknecht's answer to Hirsch that "everything's in order, you'll get further details from Zurich" (Liebknecht to Hirsch, July 28), tells him nothing. But a letter of Bernstein's comes to Hirsch from Zurich (July 24) in which Bernstein advises that "*we* have been charged with the production and *supervision* (of

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<sup>a</sup> *Sozialdemokrat. Ed.*

the paper)". There has been a discussion "between Viereck and us" in which it was found

"that your position would be made rather more difficult by the differences you had with individual comrades as the *Lateme* man,<sup>128</sup> nevertheless I do not consider these fears very important".

No word about the financing.

Hirsch answers immediately on July 26 with the question about the paper's financial position: Which comrades undertake to cover the deficit? By how much and for how long?—The question of the editor's pay plays absolutely no role in this. Hirsch merely wants to know if "the means are provided to back the paper for at least a year".

Bernstein answers on July 31: any eventual deficit will be covered by voluntary contributions, of which *some* (!) have already been subscribed. Hirsch's remarks about the direction he is thinking of giving the paper (see below) evoke disapproving remarks and *instructions*:

"The *supervisory commission* must go into that, the more so that it itself in turn is under control, i. e. is responsible. On these points, therefore, you must come to an understanding with it."

An immediate reply, telegraphed if possible, is desirable.

So, instead of any answers to his justified questions, Hirsch gets the news that he will edit under a *supervisory* commission sitting in Zurich, whose views differ very substantially from his own and the names of whose members he has not once been told!

Hirsch, quite rightly angered by this treatment, prefers to come to an understanding with the Leipzigers. His letter of August 2 to Liebknecht should be known to you, because Hirsch *expressly asked* for you and Viereck to be informed. Hirsch is even willing to submit to a Zurich supervisory commission so long as it makes written comments to the editors, and he can appeal to the Leipzig control commission.

Liebknecht meanwhile writes to Hirsch on July 28:

"*Naturally* the undertaking is financed, because the whole Party + Höchberg (inclusive) is backing it. But I can't trouble with the details."

Lieb knecht's next letter, too, contains nothing about the finances, except the assurance that the Zurich commission is not an editorial commission but is only entrusted with the *management* and the financial side. Again, on August 14, Lieb knecht writes the same to me and insists that we press Hirsch to accept. You yourself are still, on August 20, so little in the know about the true state of things that you write to me:

He (Höchberg) has no more voice in the editing of the paper than *any other well-known Party comrade.*"

Finally, Hirsch gets a letter from Viereck, August 11, in which it is admitted that

"the three resident in Zurich as the *editorial commission* are floating the paper and are to choose an editor by consent of the three Leipzigers, ... *so far as I remember*, the communicated decisions also say that according to Point 2 the said (Zurich) inaugural committee will take on *both political* and financial responsibility vis-à-vis the Party.... From this state of affairs it seems clear to me now that ... without co-operation of the three resident in Zurich, and entrusted by the Party with the launching, there can be no thought of any taking on of the editing."

Here Hirsch finally, at least, has *something* definite, if only about the editor's position vis-à-vis the Zurichers. They are an *editorial* commission; they also have the *political* responsibility; without their co-operation no editors can be appointed. In short, Hirsch is as good as told to come to terms with the three people in Zurich, whose names he has still not been given.

To make confusion worse confounded Lieb knecht writes a postscript to Viereck's letter:

"Singer has just been here from Berlin and *reported*: the supervisory commission in Zurich is *not*, as Viereck thinks, an *editorial* commission but in effect an administrative commission that is financially responsible to the Party, i. e. to us, for the paper; naturally the members also have the right and duty to discuss the editing with you (a right and duty, by the way, that *any* Party comrade has); they are *not* authorised to put you under *trusteeship*."

The three Zurichers and one Leipzig commission member—the *only one* who was present at the negotiations—insist that

Hirsch will be under the official direction of the Zurichers; another Leipzig member emphatically denies this. And Hirsch is expected to make up his mind before the gentlemen are agreed among themselves? That Hirsch was entitled to demand notice of the decisions taken, what the conditions were that he was expected to accept, was given so little thought that it does not seem once to have occurred to the Leipzigers *themselves* to get authentic information about these questions. Otherwise how was the above contradiction possible?

If the Leipzigers are unable to agree on what powers they have given the Zurichers, the latter are quite clear about them.

Schramm to Hirsch, August 14:

"Had you not written then that you would in a similar case" (like the Kayser one) "act in exactly the same way, and thus indicated an intention to stick to the same style of writing, we wouldn't waste words on it. But now, in view of this statement of yours, we must reserve the right to cast a deciding vote on acceptance of articles in the new paper."

The letter to Bernstein in which Hirsch allegedly said this was dated July 26, *long* after the conference in Zurich at which the powers of the three Zurichers were formulated. But they were so swayed in Zurich by the feeling of their bureaucratic omnipotence that they already claimed the new power on this later letter of Hirsch's to *decide* the acceptance of articles. The editorial commission is already a *censorship* commission.

Only when Höchberg came to Paris, did Hirsch learn from him the *names* of the members of both commissions.

If the negotiations with Hirsch have thus come to nothing, what caused it?

1. The mulish refusal of both the Leipzigers and the Zurichers to give him any real facts about the financial basis, and so about the paper's chances of surviving, if only for a year. He first learned the subscribed sum from me here (after your advice to me). It was therefore hardly possible to draw any other conclusion from the earlier communication (the

Party + Höchberg) than that the paper is either already mainly financed by Höchberg or will certainly soon be wholly dependent on his subsidies. And this last possibility is still far from ruled out. The sum of 800 marks (if I've got it right) is *precisely* that (£ 40 sterling) which the Society<sup>a</sup> here had to put up for *Freiheit* in the *first half-year*.

2. Liebknecht's repeated assurance, since proved totally wrong, that the Zurichers officially have nothing at all to do with controlling the editing, and the comedy of errors springing from that.

3. The certainty finally gained that the Zurichers are not only to control the editing but even to censor it, and that only the role of stooge falls to his, Hirsch's share.

That he thereupon refused, we can only think right. The Leipzig commission, as we hear from Höchberg, has now been increased by another two members who do not live in the locality, and can thus only intervene promptly when the three Leipzigers are agreed. The real centre of gravity will thereby be wholly shifted to Zurich, and Hirsch would not, any more than any other really revolutionary, proletarian-minded editor, have been able to work long with the people there. About that later.

## II. The Paper's Proposed Stand

Bernstein sends Hirsch word already on July 24 that the differences the latter had with several comrades as the *Laterne* man will make his position more difficult.

Hirsch answers that the position of the paper would, in his judgment, have to be the same in general as that of *Laterne*, i.e. one that would avoid lawsuits in Switzerland and not unnecessarily frighten people in Germany. He asks who those comrades are, and goes on:

"I know only one and I promise you that I shall treat him the same again in a similar case of *breach of discipline*."

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<sup>a</sup> The German Workers' Educational Society in London.—*Tr.*

Whereupon Bernstein answers in the sense of his new official dignity of censor:

"As regards the paper's stand, it is the view of the supervisory commission, of course, that *Latene* should not be taken as the model; in our view, the paper should go in less for political radicalism as be socialist in principle. Cases like the attack on Kayser, which was disapproved of by all the comrades without exception (!), must in all circumstances be avoided."

And so on and so forth. Liebknecht calls the attack on Kayser "a blunder", and Schramm holds it to be so dangerous that he thereupon comes the censor on Hirsch.

Hirsch writes yet again to Höchberg that a case like Kayser's

"cannot happen if there is an official Party organ whose clear statements and well-meant hints a deputy *cannot* so boldly make light of".

Viereck also writes that

"a dispassionate position and an ignoring as far as possible, of all differences arising ... is laid down" for the paper, that it must not be an "enlarged *Latene*", and that "the most that can be held against" Bernstein is "that he is of too moderate a trend, if that is a reproach at a time when we cannot sail under full colours".

Now what is this Kayser case, this unpardonable crime that Hirsch is said to have committed? Kayser speaks and votes in the Reichstag for the protective tariff, the only one of the Social-Democratic deputies to do so. Hirsch accuses him of having violated Party discipline, since Kayser

1) votes for indirect taxes, abolition of which is expressly demanded in the Party programme;

2) votes Bismarck money and thereby violates the first principle of our Party tactics, viz., not a penny for this Government.

On both points Hirsch is undeniably right. And when Kayser tramples, on the one hand, on the Party programme, which the deputies swore to, so to speak, under the Congress decisions, and on the peremptory, primary principle of Party tactics, on the other hand, and votes Bismarck *money in grati-*

*tude for the Anti-Socialist Law*, Hirsch also had a perfect right, in our view, to hit him as hard as he did.

We have never understood how it is that this attack on Kayser could provoke such anger in Germany. Now Höchberg tells me that the "parliamentary group" gave Kayser *permission* to act as he did, and that Kayser is taken to be covered by this permission.

If that's how it is, it's a bit thick. To begin with, Hirsch could know just as little about this secret decision as the rest of the world. Then the Party's shame, which previously could be laid onto Kayser alone, is greater still because of this story, and Hirsch's merit likewise greater for having openly exposed these stupid phrases and even stupider vote of Kayser's to the whole world, and so saved the Party's honour. Or is German Social-Democracy in fact infected with the parliamentary disease and believes the parliamentary group's meetings to have been turned, by an outpouring of the Holy Spirit onto the elected through the people's vote, into an infallible council, and the group's decisions into inviolable dogmas?

A blunder was indeed made, but not by Hirsch; rather by the deputies who covered up Kayser by their decision. And if those who are called upon more than anybody to see to the maintenance of Party discipline so blatantly break it themselves by such a decision, things are so much the worse. It is even worse if they believe it was not Kayser, by his speech and vote, and the other deputies by their decision, who violated Party discipline, but Hirsch, since he attacked Kayser despite this decision, still at that time unknown to him.

It is certain, moreover, that the Party has taken an unclear and indecisive stand on the tariff issue, as hitherto on nearly all economic matters arising in practice, e.g. on the imperial railways. That is because the Party organs, especially *Vorwärts*, have preferred to draw blueprints of the future social system instead of discussing these issues thoroughly. When the tariff question suddenly became a practical issue *after* the Anti-Socialist Law, views of the most varied hue were voiced, and there was not a single person who had what was needed to form a clear, correct judgment, viz., information on



the state of German industry and its position on the world market. A protectionist mood might also develop here and there among the voters, and they wanted to take that into account as well. The only way to get out of this confusion, which was to tackle it as a really political issue (as was done in *Laterne*), was not resolutely taken. It therefore could not fail to happen that the Party temporised for the first time in this debate, behaved uncertainly and vaguely, and in the end made a real fool of itself through and with Kayser.

The attack on Kayser has now become the pretext to read Hirsch a lecture in every key that the new paper should not copy the excesses of *Laterne* in any way, should go in less for political radicalism, and remain socialist and dispassionate as a matter of principle. And what is more, he is lectured by Viereck no less than by Bernstein, who because he is too moderate, appears to the former to be the proper man, because we cannot sail just now under full colours.

But why, then, do we in fact go abroad, unless to sail under full colours? Abroad there is nothing against it. In Switzerland there are no German press law, law of association, and criminal law. We therefore not only can say what we couldn't at home, even before the Anti-Socialist Law, because of German common law, but we are also *obliged* to say it. Because abroad we do not just stand before Germany, but before Europe, and have the duty, as far as *Swiss* law permits, to state the road and aim of the German Party openly to Europe. Anyone who binds himself by *German* law in Switzerland only shows that he is worthy of that German law, and, as a matter of fact, has nothing to say other than what he was permitted to say in Germany before the exceptional law. As to the possibility of the editorial staff's being temporarily prevented from returning to Germany, no regard should be taken of this. Whoever is not prepared to risk that is not worthy of such an exposed post of honour.

Furthermore, under the exceptional law the German Party has been banned, simply *because* it was the only serious opposition party in Germany. If it gives thanks to Bismarck in an organ published abroad by relinquishing this role of sole ser-

ious opposition party, and by being perfectly docile, and accepting the kick dispassionately, it thereby only demonstrates that it deserves the kick. Of all the German émigré papers that have appeared abroad since 1830, *Latene* certainly was one of the most temperate. But if even *Latene* was too insolent—then the new organ can only compromise the Party before sympathisers in non-German countries.

### III. The Manifesto of the Three Zurichers

In the meantime Höchberg's *Jahrbuch* has reached us, containing an article "*Rückblicke auf die sozialistische Bewegung in Deutschland*" ["The Socialist Movement in Germany in Retrospect"], which, as Höchberg himself told me, has been written by precisely the three members of the Zurich Commission.<sup>a</sup> Here we have their authentic criticism of the movement up till now and consequently their authentic programme for the attitude the new organ is to take in so far as this depends of them.

Right at the beginning we read:

"The movement, which Lassalle regarded as an eminently political one, to which he summoned not only the workers but all honest democrats, *at the head of which* were to march the independent representatives of science and all men imbued with true love of mankind, was lowered under the presidency of Johann Baptist von Schweitzer to a one-sided struggle of the industrial workers in their own interests."

I shall not examine whether or how far this is historically accurate. The special reproach here levelled against Schweitzer is that he *lowered* Lassalleanism, which is here regarded as a bourgeois democratic-philanthropic movement, to a one-sided struggle of the industrial workers in their interests, by *highlighting* the characteristic features of the industrial workers' class struggle against the bourgeois.<sup>b</sup> He is further reproached with

<sup>a</sup> Karl Hochberg, Eduard Bernstein and Carl August Schramm *ibid.*

<sup>b</sup> Instead of these two sentences, there was the following passage in the manuscript, which was crossed out: "Schweitzer was a rascal, but a very good chap. The service he rendered consisted precisely in that he broke through the original narrow Lassalleanism with its limited panacea of government action. Whatever he did out of base self-interest and however he clung to the Lassalle-

having "rejected bourgeois democracy". What business has bourgeois democracy within the Social-Democratic Party? If it consists of "honest men" it cannot wish to join, and if it nevertheless wants to join then only in order to make trouble.

The Lassallean party "chose to conduct itself in the most *one-sided* way as a *workers' party*". The gentlemen who write that are themselves members of a party which conducts itself in the most one-sided way as a workers' party, they are at present holding high offices in this party. This constitutes an absolute incompatibility. If they mean what they write they must leave the Party, or at least resign their offices. If they do not do so, they admit that they are proposing to utilise their official position in order to combat the proletarian character of the Party. Consequently, if the Party leaves them their offices it is betraying itself.

In the opinion of these gentlemen, then, the Social-Democratic Party should *not* be a one-sided workers' party but an all-sided party of "all men imbued with true love of mankind". It must prove this above all by laying aside coarse proletarian passions and placing itself under the guidance of educated, philanthropic bourgeois "in order to cultivate good taste" and "to learn good form" (p. 85). Then the "ragged appearance" of some of the leaders will give way to a

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lean panacea of government aid to maintain his hegemony, he did render the service of breaking through the original narrow Lassalleanism, broadening the Party's vision in economics and thereby preparing its subsequent merger with the united German Party. The class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie, this hub of all revolutionary socialism, had already been preached by Lassalle. If Schweitzer accentuated this point still stronger, it was, in itself, an indubitable advance, however he may have exploited this as a pretext for casting aspersions on persons dangerous to his dictatorship. It is quite true that he turned Lassalleanism into a *one-sided* struggle of the *industrial* workers for their interests. But one-sided only because, being the corrupt politician he was, he cared nothing about the interests of the agricultural labourers fighting against large-scale landed property. The reproach here levelled against him is not this but the fact that he lowered Lassalleanism, which is here regarded as a bourgeois democratic-philanthropic movement, to a one-sided struggle of the industrial workers in their interests, by *heightening* the characteristic features of the industrial workers' class struggle against the bourgeois."—*Ed.*

thoroughly respectable "bourgeois appearance". (As if the ragged external appearance of those here referred to were not the least they can be reproached with!) Then, too

"*numerous adherents* from the circles of the *educated* and *propertied* classes will turn up. But *these* must first be won if the ... agitation conducted is to attain *tangible successes*". German socialism has "attached too much importance to the winning of the *masses* and in so doing has neglected energetic [!] propaganda among the so-called upper strata of society". For "the Party still lacks men fit to represent it in the Reichstag". It is, however, "desirable and necessary to entrust the mandates to men who have had the time and opportunity to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the relevant material. The ordinary worker and small master craftsman ... have the necessary leisure for this only in rare and exceptional cases."

Therefore elect bourgeois!

In short: the working class of itself is incapable of emancipating itself. For this purpose it must place itself under the leadership of "educated and propertied" bourgeois who alone possess the "time and opportunity" to acquaint themselves with what is good for the workers. And secondly, the bourgeoisie is on no account to be attacked but—has to be *won over* by energetic propaganda.

But if one wants to win over the upper strata of society or only its well-disposed elements one must not frighten them on any account. And here the three Zurichers think they have made a reassuring discovery:

"Precisely at the present time, under the pressure of the Anti-Socialist Law, the Party is showing that it *does not intend* to pursue the path of violent, bloody revolution but is determined ... to follow the path of legality, that is, of *reform*."

Hence if the 500,000 to 600,000 Social-Democratic voters—between a tenth and an eighth of the whole electorate and, besides, dispersed over the length and breadth of the country—have the sense not to run their heads against a wall and to attempt a "bloody revolution" of one against ten, this proves that they forever *renounce* taking advantage of some tremendous external event and a sudden revolutionary upsurge arising from it or even of a *victory* gained by the people in a

conflict resulting from it. If Berlin should ever again be so uneducated as to have another March 18,<sup>129</sup> the Social-Democrats, instead of taking part in the fight like "riff-raff with a mania for barricades" (p. 88), must rather "follow the path of legality", put on the brakes, clear away the barricades and if necessary march with the glorious army against the one-sided, coarse, uneducated masses. Or if the gentlemen assert that this is not what they meant, what then did they mean?

But still better follows.

"Hence, the more quiet, objective and deliberate it" (the Party) "is also in its criticism of existing conditions and in its proposals to change them, the less possible will it be to repeat the present successful move" (when the Anti-Socialist Law was introduced) "with which the conscious reactionaries intimidated the bourgeoisie by conjuring up the red bogey" (p. 88).

In order to relieve the bourgeoisie of the last trace of anxiety it must be clearly and convincingly proved to it that the red bogey is really only a bogey, and does not exist. But what is the secret of the red bogey if not the dread the bourgeoisie has of the inevitable life-and-death struggle between it and the proletariat? Dread of the inevitable outcome of the modern class struggle? Do away with the class struggle and the bourgeoisie and "all independent people" will "not eschew going hand in hand with the proletarians"! And the cheated ones would be just those proletarians.

Let the Party therefore prove by its humble and lowly manner that it has once and for all laid aside the "improprieties and excesses" which occasioned the Anti-Socialist Law. If it voluntarily promises that it intends to act only within the limits of this law, Bismarck and the bourgeoisie will surely have the kindness to repeal it, as it will then be superfluous!

"Let no one misunderstand us"; we do not want "to give up our Party and our programme, we think however that for years to come we shall have enough to do if we concentrate our whole strength and energy upon the attainment of certain immediate aims which must in any case be achieved before the realisation of the more far-reaching aspirations can be thought of."

Then those bourgeois, petty bourgeois and workers who

are "at present frightened away ... by our far-reaching demands" will join us in masses.

The programme is not to be *given up* but only *postponed*—for an indefinite period. One accepts it, though not really for oneself and one's own lifetime but posthumously, as an heirloom to be handed down to one's own children and grandchildren. In the meantime one devotes one's "whole strength and energy" to all sorts of trifles and the patching up of the capitalist order of society so as to produce at least the appearance of something happening without at the same time scaring the bourgeoisie. There I must really praise the "Communist" Miquel, who proves his unshakeable belief in the inevitable overthrow of capitalist society in the course of the next few hundred years by swindling for all he's worth, contributing his honest best to the crash of 1873 and so *really* doing something to bring about the collapse of the existing order.

Another offence against good form was the "exaggerated attacks on the company promoters", who were after all "only children of their time"; it would therefore "have been better to abstain ... from abusing Strousberg and similar people". Unfortunately everyone is "only a child of his time" and if this is a sufficient excuse nobody ought ever to be attacked any more, all controversy, all struggle on our part ceases; we quietly accept all the kicks our adversaries give us because we, who are so wise, know that these adversaries are "only children of their time" and cannot act otherwise. Instead of repaying their kicks with interest we ought rather to pity these unfortunates.

Then again the support of the Commune had after all the disadvantage that

"people who were otherwise well disposed to us were alienated and in general the *hatred of the bourgeoisie* against us was increased". Furthermore, the Party "is not wholly without blame for the passage of the October Law, for it had increased the *hatred of the bourgeoisie* unnecessarily".

There you have the programme of the three censors of Zurich. In clarity it leaves nothing to be desired. Least of all

by us, who are very familiar with the whole of this phraseology from the days of 1848. It is the representatives of the petty bourgeoisie who are here making themselves heard, full of anxiety that the proletariat, under the pressure of its revolutionary position, may "go too far". Instead of determined political opposition, general mediation; instead of struggle against government and bourgeoisie, an attempt to win over and persuade them; instead of defiant resistance to ill-treatment from above, humble acquiescence and admission that the punishment was deserved. Historically necessary conflicts are all interpreted as misunderstandings, and all discussion ends with the assurance that after all we are all agreed on the main point. The people who figured as bourgeois democrats in 1848 could just as well call themselves Social-Democrats now. To the former the democratic republic was as unattainably remote as the overthrow of the capitalist system is to the latter, and therefore is of absolutely no importance in present-day practical politics; one can mediate, compromise and philanthropise to one's heart's content. It is just the same with the class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie. It is recognised on paper because its existence can no longer be denied, but in practice it is hushed up, diluted, attenuated. The Social-Democratic Party *must not* be a workers' party, it must not incur the hatred of bourgeoisie or of anyone else; it should above all conduct energetic propaganda among the bourgeoisie; instead of laying stress on far-reaching aims which frighten away the bourgeoisie and after all are not attainable in our generation, it should rather devote its whole strength and energy to those petty-bourgeois patchwork reforms which, by providing the old order of society with new props, may perhaps transform the ultimate catastrophe into a gradual, piecemeal and as far as possible peaceful process of dissolution. These are the same people who, ostensibly engaged in indefatigable activity, not only do nothing themselves but try to prevent anything happening at all except-chatter; the same people whose fear of every form of action in 1848 and 1849 obstructed the movement at every step and finally brought about its downfall, the same people

who never see reaction and are then quite astonished to find themselves in the end in a blind alley where neither resistance nor flight is possible, the same people who want to confine history within their narrow philistine horizon and over those heads history invariably proceeds to the order of the day.

As to their socialist content, this has been adequately criticised already in the *Manifesto*,<sup>a</sup> the chapter on "German, or 'True', Socialism". Where the class struggle is pushed aside as a disagreeable "coarse" phenomenon, nothing remains as a basis for socialism but "true love of mankind" and empty phraseology about "justice".

It is an inevitable phenomenon, rooted in the course of development, that people from what have hitherto been the ruling classes also join the militant proletariat and supply it with cultural elements. We have clearly stated this already in the *Manifesto*. But in this context two points are to be noted:

*First*, in order to be of use to the proletarian movement these people must bring real cultural elements into it. But with the great majority of the German bourgeois converts that is not the case. Neither the *Zukunft* nor the *Neue Gesellschaft*<sup>130</sup> have contributed anything which could advance the movement one step further. Here there is an absolute lack of real knowledge, whether factual or theoretical. In its place there are attempts to bring superficially mastered socialist ideals into harmony with the exceedingly varied theoretical stand-points which these gentlemen have brought with them from the universities or elsewhere and of which one is more confused than the other, owing to the process of decomposition which the remnants of German philosophy are at present undergoing. Instead of first of all thoroughly studying the new science themselves, each of them preferred to trim it to fit the point of view he had brought along, made himself forthwith a private science of his own and at once came forward with the pretension of wanting to teach it. Accordingly, there are about as many points of view among these gentry as there are

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<sup>a</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.—Ed.



heads; instead of elucidating a single problem they have only produced hopeless confusion—fortunately almost exclusively among themselves. The Party can very well manage without such intellectuals whose first principle is to teach what they have not learnt.

*Secondly.* If people of this kind from other classes join the proletarian movement, the first condition must be that they should not bring any remnants of bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, etc., prejudices with them but should unreservedly adopt the proletarian outlook. But these gentlemen, as has been proved, are chockfull of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois concepts. In such a petty-bourgeois country as Germany these concepts certainly have their justification. But only *outside* the Social-Democratic Workers' Party. If these gentlemen constitute themselves into a Social-Democratic petty-bourgeois party they are quite entitled to do so; one could then negotiate with them, form a bloc according to circumstances, etc. But in a workers' party they are an adulterating element. If reasons exist for tolerating them there for the moment it is our duty *only* to tolerate them, to allow them no influence in the Party leadership and to remain aware that a break with them is only a matter of time. That time, moreover, seems to have come. How the Party can tolerate the authors of this article in its midst any longer is incomprehensible to us. If however the leadership of the Party were to fall more or less into the hands of such people, the Party would simply be emasculated and it would mean the end of proletarian pluck.

As for ourselves, in view of our whole past there is only one road open to us. For almost forty years we have emphasised that class struggle is the immediate driving power of history, and in particular that the class struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat is the great lever of the modern social revolution; we, therefore, cannot possibly co-operate with people who wish to expunge this class struggle from the movement. When the International was formed we expressly formulated the battle-cry: The emancipation of the working classes must be achieved by the working classes themselves. We cannot therefore co-operate with people who openly state that the

workers are too uneducated to emancipate themselves and must be freed from above by philanthropic persons from the upper and lower middle classes. If the new Party organ adopts a line that corresponds to the views of these gentlemen, that is middle class and not proletarian, then nothing remains for us, much though we should regret it, but publicly to declare our opposition to it, and to dissolve the bonds of the solidarity with which we have hitherto represented the German Party abroad. But it is to be hoped that the things will not come *such* a pass....

Translated from the German

## Marx to Friedrich Adolph Sorge

September 19, 1879

...Meantime Höchberg came here, to entice us. He found only Engels, who made the profound abyss between us and him clear to him by a critical discussion of the *Jahrbuch* published by Höchberg (under the pseudonym of Dr. L. Richter).... Anything more shameful for the Party has never been printed. What good Bismarck did, *not for himself, but for us*, by making it possible for these chaps to make themselves really heard by the enforced silence in Germany! Höchberg was taken aback when Engels told him the plain truth; he is a "peaceful" evolution man and expects proletarian emancipation really only from "cultured bourgeois", i. e. people like himself. For Liebknecht had told him that we were all at one *au fond*.<sup>a</sup> Everyone in Germany—i. e. all leaders—shared his view, etc.

Liebknecht in fact made a big blunder in the deal with the Lassalleans, and opened both door and gateway to all these halfwits and consequently, *malgre lui*,<sup>b</sup> made for a demoralisation in the Party that could *only* be overcome by the Anti-Socialist Law.

Now if the *weekly*,<sup>c</sup> the Party journal, should actually *proceed* along the lines initiated by Höchberg's *Jahrbuch*, we should be compelled to take a public stand against such a debasement of Party and theory! Engels has drawn up a circular (letter) to

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<sup>a</sup> At bottom.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> In spite of himself.—Ed.

<sup>c</sup> *Sozialdemokrat*.—Ed.

Bebel, etc.\* (only for *private circulation* among the German Party leaders, of course), in which our standpoint is set forth without reserve. Thus the gentlemen have been warned in advance, and they know us well enough to understand that this means: either bending or breaking! If they want to compromise themselves, so much the worse for them! In no event will they be allowed to compromise *us*. You can see how low they have already been brought by parliamentarism for example from the fact, that they are accusing Hirsch of having committed a great crime—why? Because he has handled the scoundrel Kayser somewhat roughly in the *Latene* for the latter's disgraceful speech on Bismarck's tariff legislation. But now they say the Party, i.e., the handful of parliamentary representatives of the Party, had authorised Kayser to speak like that! All the more shame for this handful! But even that is a miserable excuse. In fact they were foolish enough to let Kayser speak for himself and on behalf of his constituents; but he spoke in the name of the Party. However that may be, they are already so far affected by parliamentary idiotism that they think they are *above criticism*, and they denounce criticism as a crime: *lèse-majesté....*

Translated from the German

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\* See present edition, pp. 249-64.—*Ed.*

## Engels to August Bebel

November 14, 1879

...That the business was not in the least so simple from the first, is shown by the earlier Leipzig letters, and the mistakes and blunders in general with Hirsch. The latter would have been impossible if the Leipzigers had barred the door from the first to the Zurichers'<sup>a</sup> claim to censorship. If that had been done, and Hirsch had been informed of it, everything would have been in order. But it did not happen, so that, by repeated comparison of the events and omissions, of the present advices and earlier letters of all the parties concerned, I can only conclude that Höchberg was not so wrong when he told me that the Zurich censorship was introduced only because of Hirsch and was unnecessary against Vollmar.

As for the financing,<sup>b</sup> I'm not so very surprised that you take the matter so lightly. You are only dealing with the matter for the first time. But Hirsch had practical experience precisely on *Laterne*, and we, who have already frequently seen the same thing, and also suffered it ourselves, can only admit him to be right when he wants to see this point treated seriously. *Freiheit* closed its 3rd quarter, in spite of all the donations, with a deficit of £ 100 = 2,000 marks. At no time yet have I known a German paper illegal at home that kept going without considerable subsidies. Don't be deceived by the first successes. The real difficulties of smuggling only appear with time and perpetually mount.

Your remarks about the position of the deputies and the Party leaders on the tariff question confirm every word of my

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<sup>a</sup> Karl Höchberg, Eduard Bernstein and Carl August Schramm.—*Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> Of the newspaper *Sozialdemokrat*.—*Ed.*

letter.<sup>4</sup> It was bad enough the Party that boasts of being so superior to the bourgeois in economic matters were just as split in this first economic test, and seen to know just as little as the National Liberals<sup>131</sup> who, however, at least had the excuse for their wretched failure that real bourgeois interests came into conflict here. It is even worse that you let this split be obvious, that you behaved unsurely and hesitantly. Once agreement was not obtainable, there was only one road: to declare the issue here a purely bourgeois matter, which it really is, and not to vote at all. The worst was that Kayser was allowed to make his miserable speeches and to *vote for the Bill on the first reading*. Hirsch attacked him first *after* this vote, and when Kayser then voted against the Bill on the 3rd reading, that made matters worse for him rather than better.

The Congress resolution<sup>132</sup> is no excuse. If the Party still commits itself today to all the old Congress resolutions adopted in smug peacetime, it will shackle itself. The legal grounds on which a living Party operates must not only be self-adopted but also be alterable at any time. Since the Anti-Socialist Law makes all Congresses impossible, and so amendment of old Congress resolutions, it also cancels the binding power of those resolutions. A party that is denied the possibility of making binding resolutions has to seek its laws only in its living, always changing needs. If, however, it subordinates these needs to earlier resolutions that are now rigid and dead, it will dig its own grave.

That is the formal side. The substance of the resolution, however, makes it all the more void. 1) It contradicts the programme by endorsing the granting of *indirect taxes*. 2) It is in contradiction with the Party's binding tactics in that it permits voting for taxes for today's state. 3) It says the following however, translated into plain German:

The Congress recognises that it is not sufficiently informed on the tariff question to be able to pass a definite resolution for or against. It thus declares itself to be *incompetent* on this matter, and restricts itself for the sake of the dear Public to

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<sup>4</sup> See present edition, pp. 249-64.-*Ed.*

laying down commonplaces that partly say nothing, and partly contradict one another or the Party programme, and is happy to be shut of the matter in that way.

And must this declaration of incompetence, with which this then really academic question was put off in peacetime, still be binding on the whole of the Party in present wartime, when the issue has become a burning one, until it is revoked legally by a new resolution that it is now impossible to pass?

So much is certain—whatever the impression that Hirsch's attacks on Kayser made on the deputies, they reflected the impression that Kayser's irresponsible behaviour made on German and non-German Social-Democrats abroad. It is high time to appreciate that the Party's reputation has to be upheld in Europe and America as well as at home.

And this brings me to the Report.<sup>133</sup> Although the beginning is very good and the treatment of the protective tariff debate—in these circumstances—is skilful the concessions made to the German philistines in the third part are unwelcome. Why that wholly superfluous passage about the "civil war", why that kowtowing to "public opinion" which in Germany will always be that of the beerhouse philistine? Why here the total obliteration of the class character of the movement? Why give the Anarchists this ground for rejoicing? And all these concessions moreover are wholly useless. The German philistine is cowardice incarnate; he respects only those who inspire him with fear. But anyone who wants to get into his good graces he considers one of his own kind and respects him no more than his own kind, namely not at all. And now that the beerhouse philistine's "storm" of indignation, called public opinion, has, as is generally admitted, subsided again and since heavy taxation has in any case knocked the spirit out of these people, why these honeyed speeches? If you only knew how they sound abroad! It is quite a good thing that Party organs must be edited by people who are in the thick of the Party and the struggle. But if you had been only six months abroad you would think quite differently of this entirely unnecessary self-debasement of the Party deputies before the philistines. The storm that broke over the heads of the French

Socialists after the Commune was after all something quite different from the outcry raised in Germany on account of the Nobiling affair.<sup>134</sup> And how much more proud and dignified was the bearing of the French! Where do you find among them such weakness, such paying of compliments to one's opponents? They kept silent when they could not speak freely; they let the philistines scream as much as they liked knowing that their time would surely come again; and now it has come.

What you say about Höchberg, I'll willingly believe.<sup>135</sup> I have absolutely nothing against his private character. I also believe that he only realised what he wants at heart because of the persecution of Socialists. That what he wants is middle class and not proletarian, I tried to make clear to him—probably to no purpose. But since he has already compiled a programme, I must attribute more than German philistine weakness to him, if I accept that he is not trying to get recognition. Höchberg before that article and Höchberg after are two very different people.

But now I find a despatch from the Lower Elbe in No. 5 of *Sozialdemokrat*, in which Auer takes my letter as a pretext to accuse me—without my being named, but adequately described—of “sowing distrust of the most tried comrades”, and of *slandering* them (since otherwise I would be right in this). Not satisfied with that, he falsely attributes things to me which are as silly as they are infamous, and do not occur in my letter at all. It seems as if Auer fancies that *I* want something from the Party. You, however, know that *I* don't want anything from the Party but that, on the contrary, *the Party* wants something *from me*. You and Liebknecht know that the sole thing that I have asked at all from the Party is for it to leave me in peace, so that I can finish my theoretical work. You know that for the past sixteen years I have been asked over and over again to write for the Party organs; which I have also done, I have written whole series of articles, whole pamphlets at Liebknecht's *express request*—such as *The Housing Question* and *Anti-Dühring*. I will not go more fully into what kind of compliments I got for it from the Party, e.g. the agreeable Congress discussions about Dühring. You also know that Marx



and I, of our own free will, have taken on defence of the Party against foreign adversaries ever since the Party has existed, and that we have only asked one thing from the Party for it, that it should never be untrue to itself.

But when the Party asks me if I will contribute to its new organ,<sup>a</sup> it should naturally take care at least that I will not be slandered in this organ itself while the negotiations are in progress and, moreover, by one of the nominal co-proprietors.<sup>b</sup> I know no literary or other code of honour with which that would be compatible; I believe even a reptile would not put up with it. I must therefore pose the following questions:

1) what satisfaction can you offer me for this unprovoked and mean insult?

2) what guarantee have you to offer me against its like being repeated?

As for the rest I only want to remark about Auer's insinuations that we here underestimate neither the difficulties with which the Party has to contend in Germany nor the significance of the successes achieved nevertheless and the quite exemplary conduct up to now of the Party *masses*. It naturally goes without saying that every victory gained in Germany gladdens our hearts as much as one gained elsewhere, and even more so because from the very beginning the development of the German Party was associated with our theoretical statements. But for that very reason we must be particularly interested to see that the practical conduct of the German Party and especially the public utterances of the Party leadership should be in harmony with the general theory. Our criticism is certainly not pleasant for some people. But it surely must be of greater value to the Party and its leadership than all uncritical compliments to have abroad a few people who, unbiassed by confusing local conditions and details of the struggle, measure happenings and utterances from time to time by the theoretical propositions valid for all modern proletarian movements, and who convey to it the impression its actions create outside Germany....

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<sup>a</sup> *Sozialdemokrat*.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> Ignaz Auer.—Ed.

## Engels to August Bebel

December 16, 1879

...In No. 10 of *Sozialdemokrat* there is a "historical retrospect on the press" which undoubtedly comes from one of the three stars.\* In it it is said that comparison with belletrists like Gutzkow and Laube can *only be a matter of pride* for Social-Democrats, i. e. with people who had long before 1848 buried the last remnant of political character, if they ever had any. Further:

"The events of 1848 were bound to come either *with all the blessings of peace* if governments had satisfied the demands of the time, or—since they did not—no other way was *unfortunately* left than that of revolution."

There is no room for us in a paper in which it is possible virtually to *bewail* the Revolution of 1848 that for the first time opened wide the portals to Social-Democracy. It plainly appears from this article and Höchberg's letter that the stellar trio claims the right to set forth in *Sozialdemokrat*, alongside the proletarian views, its own petty-bourgeois socialist views first clearly enunciated in the *Jahrbuch*. And I fail to see how you in Leipzig can prevent this without a formal breach, once things have come to such a pass. You continue to regard these people as Party comrades. We cannot do so. The article in the *Jahrbuch* draws a sharp and absolutely distinct line between us. We cannot even negotiate with these people so long as they assert that they belong to the same party as we. The points in question are points that can

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\* Karl Höchberg, Eduard Bernstein and Carl August Schramm.—*Ed.*

no longer be discussed in any proletarian party. To make them a subject of discussion within the party would be to put in question the whole of proletarian socialism.

As a matter of fact it is better that under these circumstances we do not co-operate. We should have had to protest constantly and to announce publicly our withdrawal after a few weeks, which after all would not have helped matters.

We greatly regret that just at this time of suppression we are unable to support you unconditionally. As long as the Party in Germany remained true to its proletarian character we set aside all other considerations. But now, when the petty-bourgeois elements that have been admitted openly show their true colours, the situation has changed. Once they are permitted to smuggle their petty-bourgeois ideas piecemeal into the organ of the German Party, this fact simply closes that organ to us.

The oath business<sup>136</sup> impresses us very little. Perhaps it was possible, as you wanted, to find another way that would have got rid of the embarrassing impression, but it does not matter very much. We'll maintain the desired discretion.

Malon's journal<sup>a</sup> can do good since 1) Malon is not the man to cause much mischief, and 2) his contributors among the French will take care that things stay in the right channel. If Höchberg dreams of finding soil there for his lower middle class games, he will find he has thrown his money away.

The Magdeburg election pleased us no end. The firmness of the worker masses in Germany is admirable. The workers' correspondences of *Sozialdemokrat* are the only good thing in it.

I return Höchberg's letter herewith. The man is past help. If we do not want to join the society of the *Zukunft* people, it's because of personal vanity. But a third of the people were and still are *totally unknown* names to us and roughly another third were notorious petty bourgeois socialists. And that calls itself a "scientific" journal! Moreover, Höchberg believes it has had an "enlightening" effect. Witness his own so remarkably enlightened head, which to this day can still not make out the

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<sup>a</sup> *Revue socialiste*.—Ed.

difference, in spite of all my efforts, between lower middle class and proletarian socialism. All the differences are "misunderstandings". Just like the democratic wailers of 1848.<sup>137</sup> Or his "rash" conclusions. Of course, any conclusion is rash that lends a definite sense to these gentlemen's talk. They not only want to say *this* but also if possible the contrary.

As for the rest, world history is taking its course, regardless of these wise and moderate philistines. In Russia matters must come to a head in a few months from now. Either absolutism is overthrown and then, after the downfall of the great reserve of reaction, a different atmosphere will at once pervade Europe. Or a European war will break out which will also bury the *present* German Party beneath the inevitable struggle of each people for its national existence. Such a war would be the greatest misfortune for us; it might set the movement back twenty years. But the new party that would ultimately have to emerge anyhow would in all European countries be free from a mass of objectionable and petty matters that now everywhere hamper the movement.

Yours in friendship,  
F. E.

Translated from the German

## Engels to Johann Philipp Becker

December 19, 1879

...Yesterday I wrote to Bebel<sup>a</sup> that we cannot contribute to *Sozialdemokrat*. It follows from Höchberg's further letters that he takes it as a matter of course that he will be able to take the same view in it as in the *Jahrbuch*. And while the Leipzigers remain on the present terms with him and his philistine colleagues, I cannot see how they can refuse him. But that rules us out. Ever since the *Manifesto*<sup>b</sup> (or rather Marx's work against Proudhon<sup>c</sup>), we have been continually fighting petty bourgeois socialism, so we cannot join forces with it in the present when, using the Anti-Socialist Law as an excuse, it is once again raising its banner. And it is also better so. We would get caught in an endless debate with the gentlemen, *Sozialdemokrat* would become a battleground, and in the end we would all the same have to openly declare our resignation. All that would help no one but the Prussians and the bourgeois, and so it's better we avoid it. But that should not by any means be taken as an example for other people who, unlike us, are not forced *by the very negotiations that have taken place* to accept the challenge of Höchberg and company. I see no reason at all why you, for example, should not contribute to the paper. The despatches of the German workers are the only thing in it that give one pleasure, and pieces from you would only help the paper; and since it exists, it is always preferable that it be the best paper possible rather than a bad

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<sup>a</sup> See present edition, pp. 273-75.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.—Ed.

<sup>c</sup> K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*.—Ed.

one. I say this in the expectation that the people will pay you properly, since it would be much too much even to expect you, in your position, to work gratis. Nor are we particularly angry with the Leipzigers because of the mess. We have seen this coming for years. Liebknecht just cannot leave off go-betweening and making friends right and left, and if the Party seems really strong, at least outwardly, in numbers and possibly also financially, he's not too punctilious about the elements drawn in. That will go on until he burns his fingers by it. When that happens the good people will again come back into the right channel....

Translated from the German

## Engels to Johann Philipp Becker

April 1, 1880

...I fear our friends in Germany are mistaken about the kind of organisation that is to be maintained in the present circumstances. I am not against the elected Members of Parliament acting as the top people, since there is no other leadership, but they cannot demand the strict obedience that the old Party leadership elected for *this* purpose could, nor can they get it. Least of all in the present circumstances, without a press, and without mass meetings. The looser the organisation is now in appearance, so much the stronger it is in reality. Instead of which they want to preserve the old system by which the Party leadership takes the final decisions (although there is no Congress to correct it or if necessary remove it), and whoever attacks one of them is a heretic. The best themselves know that there are sundry incompetent and also otherwise not quite kosher people among them, and they must of course be very limited if they do not realise that no one is in command in their organ except Höchberg, by virtue of his money bag, and his fellow philistines Schramm and Bernstein. In my opinion the *old* Party and its former organisation are at an end. If the European movement soon comes into action again, as is to be expected, then the great mass of the German proletariat will come into it, and the 500,000 men of Anno Domini 1878 will be the schooled, disciplined core of this mass. But then the old "tight organisation" handed down from the Lassallean tradition will be a drag that really could hold back a cart but could not stop an avalanche.

And the things these people are doing are quite capable of blowing the Party apart. First of all the Party still has to sup-

port the old propagandists and editors by keeping a whole pack of papers going in which there is nothing at all that could not be read in any middle class yellow rag. And the workers won't put up with it for long. Second, they mainly behave so tamely in the Reichstag and the Saxon Diet that they are making fools of themselves and the Party before the whole world, making "positive" proposals to the existing Government on how it can do things better in minor matters of detail, etc. And the workers, who are outlawed and are handed over, bound hand and foot, to police despotism, are to take it as true representation! Third, the philistine, lower middle class bunch of *Sozialdemokrat*, of whom they approve. In *every* letter they write to us we should by no means believe any reports that splits or differences of opinion have erupted in the Party, but everyone who comes from Germany assures us that the people are all mixed up by this behaviour of the leaders and do not in the least agree with it. That is also in character with our workers, who have stood the test so splendidly; and it could not be otherwise. It is a feature of the German movement that all the leadership's mistakes are always made up for by the masses; that's how it will most likely be this time...

Translated from the German



## Engels to Eduard Bernstein

March 12, 1881

...It is simply a falsification perpetrated by the Manchester bourgeoisie in their own interests that they call "socialism" every interference by the state in free competition—protective tariffs, guilds, tobacco monopoly, nationalisation of certain branches of industry, the Overseas Trade Society,<sup>138</sup> and the royal porcelain factory. We should *criticise* this but not *believe* it. If we do the latter and develop a theory on the basis of this belief our theory will collapse together with its premises upon simple proof that this alleged socialism is nothing but, on the one hand, feudal reaction and, on the other, a pretext for squeezing out money, with the secondary object of turning as many proletarians as possible into civil servants and pensioners dependent upon the state, thus organising alongside of the disciplined army of soldiers and civil servants an army of workers as well. Compulsory voting brought about by superiors in the state apparatus instead of by factory overseers—a fine sort of socialism! But that's where people get if they believe the bourgeoisie what it does not believe itself but only pretends to believe: that the state means socialism....

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
p. 320

## Engels to Marx

August 11, 1881

...Yesterday morning I informed Mr. Shipton that he will get no more leading articles from me. Kautsky has sent me a dull thing about international factory legislation in a bad translation which I corrected and sent to Shipton.<sup>139</sup> Yesterday the proofs and a letter arrived from Shipton, in which two places were "too strong", one of which, moreover, he had wrongly understood, and would I moderate them. I did and answered:

1. what he meant sending me suggested changes on Tuesday<sup>a</sup> (Wednesday here<sup>b</sup>) when my answer could get back to London only on Thursday, *after* the paper<sup>c</sup> comes out;

2. if *this* article was too strong for him, then how much the more so mine were; accordingly it would be better for us both if I stopped;

3. my time no longer permitted me to write a weekly, regular leading article, and I had previously intended to tell him this *after* the Trade Union Congress (September).<sup>140</sup> In the circumstances, however, it might improve his position at this Congress if I stopped now;

4. it was his damned duty to inform me about the Max Hirsch article *before* printing it.<sup>141</sup> I cannot stay on the staff of a paper which lends itself to writing up these German Trade Unions, comparable only to those very worst English ones

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<sup>a</sup> On August 9.—*Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> In Bridlington Quay, Yorks.—*Tr.*

<sup>c</sup> *Labour Standard*.—*Ed.*

which allow themselves to be led by men sold to, or at least paid by the middle class.<sup>a</sup> However, I wish him lots of luck, etc. The letter should have reached him this morning.

I did not write him the all-decisive reason, namely the absolute powerlessness of my articles to influence the rest of the paper and the public. If there is a result it is a hidden reaction from secret free-trade apostles. The paper remains the same medley of all possible and impossible crochets and in political details  $\pm$ , but mainly Gladstonian.<sup>b</sup> The response that once appeared to be awakened in one or two numbers, has again died out. The British working man does not want to go further; he must be stirred by events, by the loss of the industrial monopoly. *En attendant, habeat sibi.*<sup>c</sup>...

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> All of this sentence after "stay" Engels wrote in English.—*Tr.*

<sup>b</sup> More or less, but mainly Gladstonian.—*Tr.*

<sup>c</sup> Meanwhile, let him have his way.—*Ed.*

## Engels to Eduard Bernstein

January 25 and 31, 1882

...We were greatly interested in the reports about the happenings among the "leaders" in Germany. I never concealed the fact that in my opinion the masses in Germany are much better than the gentlemen in the leadership, especially since the Party, thanks to the press and agitation, has become a milch cow for them, providing butter, and now Bismarck and the bourgeoisie have all of a sudden butchered that cow.<sup>142</sup> The thousand people who thereby immediately lost their livelihoods had the personal misfortune of not being placed directly into the position of revolutionaries, i.e., sent into exile. Otherwise very many of those who are now bemoaning their lot would have gone over to Most's camp or at any rate would find the *Sozialdemokrat* much too tame. Most of those people remained in Germany and had to, went to rather reactionary places, remained socially ostracised, dependent for their living on philistines, and a great number of them were themselves contaminated by philistinism. Soon they pinned all their hopes on a repeal of the Anti-Socialist Law. No wonder that under pressure of philistinism the idea, which is really absurd, took hold of them that this could be attained by meekness. Germany is an execrable country for people with scant will-power. The narrowness and pettiness of civil as well as political relations, the small-town character of even the big cities, the small but constantly increasing vexations encountered in the struggle with police and bureaucracy—all this is exhausting and does not spur on to resistance, and thus in this great children's nursery<sup>a</sup> many become children themselves.

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<sup>a</sup> An allusion to a line in Heinrich Heine's cycle "Die Heimkehr".—Ed.

Petty relations beget petty views, so that it takes great intelligence and energy for anyone living in Germany to be able to see beyond his immediate environment, to keep one's eye upon the great interconnection of world events and not to lapse into that self-complacent "objectivity" which sees no further than its nose and precisely for that reason amounts to the most narrow-minded subjectivity even when it is shared by thousands of such subjects.

But no matter how natural may be the rise of this trend, which covers up its lack of insight and power of resistance with "objective" supersapience, it must be resolutely fought. And here the masses of workers furnish the best pillar of support. They alone live in Germany under more or less modern conditions; all their minor and major afflictions centre in the oppression emanating from *capital*, and whereas all other struggles in Germany, social as well as political, are petty and paltry and concern mere trifles which elsewhere have been settled long ago, their struggle is the only one being fought magnificently, the only one that is up to the mark of the times, the only one that does not exhaust the fighters but provides them with ever new energy. The more, therefore, you can find your correspondents among real workers not turned into "leaders", the more chance you will have of creating a counterbalance to the leader whiners....

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 327-28

## Engels to August Bebel

June 21, 1882

...As to its coming to a clash one day with the middle class disposed element of the Party, and to a split between the right and left wings, I have long since had no illusions, and have already spoken about it as, in effect, desirable in the manuscript piece about the *Jahrbuch* article.<sup>a</sup> It can only delight us that you have come to the same opinion. I did not expressly mention the point in my last letter because it seems to me there is no haste about this split. If the gentlemen freely make up their minds to form a separate right wing everything would soon be in order. But they will hardly do so; they know they would represent an army of nothing but officers without soldiers, like the "Robert Blum Column" that joined us in the campaign of 1849<sup>143</sup> and only wanted "to fight under the command of the gallant Willich". When we asked how many fighting men this column of heroes consisted of, we laughed—you can imagine the mirth: one colonel, eleven officers, one bugler, and two men. The colonel, moreover, gave himself all the trouble to appear a principled Knackersjack<sup>b</sup> and had a horse he could not ride. The gentlemen all want to be captains, but they can *play* captain only within our Party and so *they* will avoid a parting of ways. On the other hand they know that *we* also have our reasons, under the power of the Anti-Socialist Law, to avoid internal divisions that we cannot openly debate. We shall therefore have to put

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<sup>a</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, Circular Letter to August Bebel, Wilhelm Liebknecht, Wilhelm Bracke and Others (present edition, pp. 249-64).—*Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> Knackersjack (*Schinderhannes*) was the nickname of Johann Bückler, a notorious highwayman (1777-1803).—*Tr.*

up with these people's written and oral cliquishness and lamentations, until we are again in a position to explain the points of difference of both principle and tactics to the workers in our country unless they go too far and force us to it. Meanwhile the Anti-Socialist Law is moving, one way or the other, to its blessed end, and as soon as it is repealed, we must, in my opinion, say what the position is in plain terms; then the behaviour of these gentlemen will itself show what further has to be done.

Not until they have organised themselves as a separate right wing will it be possible to arrange joint action from time to time, as far as permissible, even to conclude an agreement with them, etc. Although this will hardly be necessary: the split itself will expose their weakness. They have neither following among the masses nor talent, nor knowledge—they have only pretensions, and those swollen. However, we shall see. In any case clarity will be introduced that way into the situation and we'll be delivered from an element that is not part of us at all.

We need not fear no longer having presentable candidates for the Reichstag then. That is pure imagination. Even if a worker says *mir* instead of *mich*<sup>a</sup> in the Reichstag, we shall only need to ask: How long ago was it that the Hohenzollerns could discriminate between *mir* and *mich*, not to mention the field marshals. Frederick William III and the adored Louisa made more mistakes of grammar than even A. Kapell.<sup>b</sup> And if Bismarck is not embarrassed to appoint workers to his Economic Council who speak incorrectly but vote correctly, are *we* to let ungrammatical speech but grammatical voting embarrass us? I know, however, that is an abomination for some people. But not for us. And it will put an end to our deputies' totally absurd practice that each must speak in turn, which is said to be "democratic" but isn't. How can a Party have so many capable parliamentary speakers? And how will it be when 200 of ours sit in the Reichstag?

<sup>a</sup> The dative and accusative forms of the first person pronoun, a distinction long lost in English.— *Tr.*

<sup>b</sup> Social-Democratic member of the Reichstag (1877-78).— *Tr.*

But you can count on it: when it comes to a clash with these gentlemen and the left wing of the Party makes a stand, we shall be with you in all circumstances, actively, and with open sights. If I have only now given my name as a contributor to *Sozialdemokrat*, that was only because of the influence those people exercised on the paper for such a long time and of the long-lacking guarantee that they would not get it again....

Translated from the German



## Engels to Eduard Bernstein

October 20, 1882

...It seems that *every* workers' party of a big country can develop only through internal struggle, which accords with the laws of dialectical development in general. The German Party became what it is in the struggle between the Eisenachers and Lassalleans where fighting played a major role. Unity became possible only when the bunch of scoundrels that had been deliberately trained by Lassalle to be his tools had outlived their day, and even then it was brought about by us much too hastily. In France, the people who, although they have sacrificed the Bakuninist theory, continue to employ Bakuninist means of struggle, and who at the same time want to sacrifice the class character of the movement to further their special ends, must also first outlive their usefulness before unity is possible again. To preach unity under such circumstances would be sheer folly. Moral sermons avail nothing against infantile disorders, which are after all unavoidable under present-day circumstances....

Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 332-33

## Engels to August Bebel

October 28, 1882

...In France the long-expected split has taken place.<sup>144</sup> The original co-operation of Guesde and Lafargue with Malon and Brousse was probably unavoidable when the Party was founded, but Marx and I never had any illusions that it could last. The issue is purely one of principle: is the struggle to be conducted *as a class struggle* of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, or is it to be permitted that, in good opportunist (or as this is called in the socialist translation: Possibilist) style, the class character of the movement, together with the programme, is to be dropped wherever more votes, more "adherents", can thereby be won? By declaring themselves in favour of the latter alternative Malon and Brousse have sacrificed the proletarian class character of the movement and made separation inevitable. Very well. The development of the proletariat proceeds everywhere through internal struggles, and France, which is now setting up a workers' party for the first time, is no exception. We in Germany have left behind the first phase of the internal struggle (with the Lassalleans); other phases still lie before us. Unity is quite a good thing so long as it is possible, but there are things that stand above unity. And when, like Marx and myself, one has all one's life fought harder against self-styled Socialists than against anyone else (for we regarded the bourgeoisie only as a *class* and hardly ever involved ourselves in conflicts with individual bourgeois), one cannot be greatly grieved that the inevitable struggle has broken out....

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 333-34

## Engels to Eduard Bernstein

November 28, 1882

...It is no wonder that Malon has a big public for the thin beggar's broth of his programmeless *Considérants*.<sup>a</sup> When one starts a party without a programme, which anyone can join, it is no longer a party. The old sectarians, for whom Malon-Vollmar have such a loving regard, have shown their impotence for ages, and are best left to die off peacefully. The *chambres syndicales*<sup>b</sup>—indeed, or any strike society that, like the English trades unions, only, fights for high wages and short working hours, but otherwise doesn't give a rap for the movement—if all these are counted in the workers' party, one really builds a party for the *maintenance* of wage labour and not for its abolition. And as Marx tells me, most of these Paris *chambres syndicales* are even more colourless than the English trades unions. To abolish any party programme for the sake of such people is not the way to drive them ahead. And who has ever heard of a party without a programme, a party whose wishy-washy *Considérants* (drawn up quite in the spirit of the communist Miquel, who also believes in the possibility of communism in 500 years<sup>145</sup>), conclude that any group can produce its own private programme!

But now, what does Malon get from the *chambres syndicales*? They pay no contributions, they send no delegates to the federal council, they were nominally in the *Union fédérative*<sup>146</sup> before the split and nominally remain there; they are, as

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<sup>a</sup> Preamble, grounds (in law).—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> Trade union committees.—Ed.

Lafargue says, "complètement platoniques".<sup>a</sup> They are just figures. How things stand with Malon's other groups, *vide* Lafargue:

"Dans le XVII arrondissement nos amis ont organisé, après le congrès, un groupe qui immédiatement s'est trouvé composé de 29 membres. Pour nous faire pièce, les possibilistes ont *subdivisé* leur groupe qui, à ce que l'on me dit, ne se composait que d'une 20<sup>e</sup> membres, *en cinq sous-groupes* réunis par un comité fédéral du quartier. Le tour est joli, mais ne trompe que les indifférents et ceux qui sont éloignés."<sup>b</sup> 197

Exactly the way the Bakuninists did it. According to Lafargue the Possibilists are really strong, on the contrary, only in Montmartre, and are also well organised there.

With a proper programme it is still better for the moment, to be in the minority—*quoad* organisation—than to have a big, but nearly show, following. We have been in the minority our whole life and have been quite happy with it. And the weaker organisation in Paris (if that is really the case, which I am still not convinced of—the Possibilists dared not attend the Roanners' *conférence contradictoire* that discussed the two congresses<sup>148</sup>), the weaker organisation in Paris would be compensated for two or three times over by journalistic influence.

How your Paris correspondents can see "the real workers' party" in the Saint Etienners, is therefore beyond me. First of all the people are not a party at all, least of all a *workers'* party, just as little as the workers here.<sup>c</sup> They are only in bud, what the local people have fully developed into, viz., the *tail of the radical bourgeois party*. The only thing that holds them together is middle class radicalism; they have no workers' programme whatsoever. And the worker leaders who have lent themselves to fabricating such worker-voting cattle for the radicals, in my opinion are committing a *direct betrayal*....

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> Completely platonic.—Ed.

<sup>b</sup> "In the 17th district our friends organised a group after the Congress that immediately consisted of 29 members. To play a trick on us the Possibilists *subdivided* their group, which from what they tell me consisted of only 20 members, *into five sub-groups* united by a local federal committee. It's a pretty trick but deceives only the indifferent and those who are remote from us."—Ed.

<sup>c</sup> In London.—Tr.

## Engels to Eduard Bernstein

March 1, 1883

...We have always done our utmost to combat the petty-bourgeois and philistine mentality within the Party, because this mentality, developed since the time of the Thirty Years' War,<sup>149</sup> has infected *all* classes in Germany and become a hereditary German evil, sister to servility and submissiveness and to all the hereditary German vices. This is what has made us ridiculous and contemptible abroad. It is the main cause of the slackness and the weakness of character which predominate among us; it reigns on the throne as often as in the cobbler's lodging. Only since a *modern* proletariat has been formed in Germany has a class developed there which is hardly affected at all by this hereditary German malady, a class which has demonstrated that it possesses clear insight, energy, humour, tenacity in struggle. And ought we not to fight against every attempt artificially to inculcate the old hereditary poison of philistine slackness and philistine narrow-mindedness in this healthy class, the only healthy class in Germany? But in their fright right after the criminal attempts<sup>150</sup> and the Anti-Socialist Law, the leaders exhibited so much anxiety which merely proved that they had lived much too long among philistines and were influenced by the views of the philistines. They intended at that time that the Party should *seem* to be philistine if not actually *become* philistine. All this has now fortunately been overcome, but the philistine elements, which were drawn into the Party shortly before the Anti-Socialist Law and prevail particularly among college graduates and undergraduates who did not get as far as the

examinations, are still there and have to be carefully watched. We are glad to have you helping there. You hold the most important post with *Sozialdemokrat*.

But still, leave the unfortunate *Jahrbuch* article to rest in peace. It excused the stockjobbers. But one can quite well be a stockjobber oneself and at the same time a socialist, and therefore hate and despise the *class* of stockbrokers. Has it ever occurred to me to excuse myself for having also once been an *associé* of a mill? Anyone who reproached me with it would get a good rebuff. And if I were sure of being able to make a million on the Exchange tomorrow, and put a big mass of funds at the disposal of the Party in Europe and America, I would go to the Stock Exchange immediately.

You are quite right in what you say about courting praise from the opponents. We have often been badly touched on the raw when the slightest appreciative Katheder-socialist fart was joyfully registered in *Volksstaat* and *Vorwärts*. Miquel began his treachery with the sentence: "We must extort recognition from the bourgeoisie in every field". And Rudolf Meyer may flatter us ever so much, he can only get recognition again, if at all, for the really deserving *Politische Gründer*.<sup>a</sup> We have never, of course, spoken about serious matters with him, but almost only about Bismarck and the like. But Meyer is at least a decent chap, who also knows how to bare his teeth to the noble gentlemen and is no pusher like all the Katheder-socialists, who also now flourish in Italy; a sample, Achille Loria, was here recently, but after a couple of visits had had enough of me....

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> R. Meyer, *Politische Gründer und die Corruption in Deutschland* (Political Jobbers and Corruption in Germany).—Ed.

## Engels to August Bebel

August 30, 1883

...The Manifesto of the Democratic Federation in London<sup>151</sup> has been issued by about twenty to thirty small associations, which under different names (consisting always of the same people) have for at least the last twenty years been constantly trying to put themselves forward, and always with the same lack of success. The only important thing is that now at last they are obliged openly to proclaim our theory as their own, whereas during the period of the International it seemed to them to be imposed on them from outside; and also that recently a lot of young people stemming from the bourgeoisie have appeared on the scene who, to the disgrace of the English workers it must be said, understand things better and take them up more enthusiastically than the workers themselves. For even in the Democratic Federation the workers for the most part accept the new programme only unwillingly and as a matter of form. The leader of the Democratic Federation, Hyndman, is an ex-conservative and an arrantly chauvinistic but not stupid careerist, who behaved pretty shabbily to Marx (to whom he had been introduced by Rudolph Meyer) and for this reason was dropped by us personally.<sup>152</sup> Do not on any account whatever let yourself be bamboozled into thinking there is a real proletarian movement going on here. I know Liebknecht is trying to delude himself and all the world about this, but it is not the case. The elements at present active may become important now, since they have accepted our theoretical programme and so acquired a basis, but only if a spontaneous movement breaks out here among the

workers and they succeed in getting control of it. Till then they will remain individual minds with a hotch-potch of confused sects, remnants of the great movement of the forties,<sup>a</sup> standing behind them, and nothing more. And – apart from the unexpected – a really general workers' movement will come into existence here only when it is brought home to the workers that England's world monopoly is broken. The fact that they participate in the domination of the world market was and is the economic basis of the political nullity of the English workers. The tail of the bourgeoisie in the economic exploitation of this monopoly but nevertheless sharing in its advantages, they are, of course, politically the tail of the "great Liberal Party", which for its part makes up to them in small matters: it has recognised Trade Unions and strikes as legitimate factors, has abandoned the fight for an unlimited working day and has given the mass of better-off workers the vote. But once America and the joint competition of the other industrial countries make a big enough breach in this monopoly (and in iron this is coming rapidly, in cotton unfortunately not yet) you will see a lot of things happen here....

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 343-44

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<sup>a</sup> The Chartist movement. – *Ed.*



## Engels to August Bebel

June 6, 1884

...Friend Bismarck let down his breeches sooner than I expected and showed the assembled people the backside of his right to work; the English Poor Law of the 43rd year of Elizabeth's reign together with the Bastille amendment of 1834!<sup>153</sup> What joy for Blos, Geiser and Co., who had been peddling the right to work for quite some time and seemed already to imagine that *they* had caught Bismarck! Since I am on this theme again, I cannot conceal from you that the behaviour of these gentlemen in the Reichstag – as far as the bad newspaper reports let one judge – and in their own press convinces me more and more that at least *I* do not stand on the same ground with them and have nothing in common with them. These pretended “educated” but in reality absolutely ignorant philanthropists, who are persistently unwilling to learn anything, who have not only been allowed, against the long-standing warnings of Marx and me, but helped to get Reichstag seats, seem to me to realise more and more that they have the majority in the Party parliamentary group, and that it is they, with their toadying for any state socialist scraps that Bismarck throws to them, who are most of all interested in the Anti-Socialist Law's being kept and administered with leniency only against such well-meaning people as them; and again, it is only people like you and I that prevent the government from doing so, for if they get rid of us, they could then easily prove that there was no need for an Anti-Socialist Law against them....

Translated from the German

## Engels to Wilhelm Liebknecht

February 4, 1885

...You sent the scribbler all the same to me, I hope he is the last of this sort. You yourself are well aware how these insolent louts abuse you. The man is totally beyond redemption, just like his friend Quarck—they are both twaddlers<sup>a</sup>—and if they approach you and you accept them, I'll get out of the way a bit. Will you never be convinced that these half-baked literary riff-raff can only adulterate and make a mess of the Party? According to you Viereck, too, would never get into the Reichstag! The lower middle class element in the Party is more and more getting the upper hand. The name of Marx is being suppressed as far as possible. If this goes on, there will be a split in the Party, you can depend on it. You are blaming everything on the fact that the philistine gents have taken umbrage. But there are moments when it is necessary to offend them, otherwise they will become too arrogant. Then will the chapter on German or True Socialism again be applicable after 40 years?<sup>b</sup>...

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> Engels made a pun here on Quarck's name, the German noun, *Quark* meaning curd, and figuratively trifle, rubbish, and twaddle.— *Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 510-12).— *Ed.*

## Engels to Johann Philipp Becker

April 2, 1885

...As was bound to happen under the Anti-Socialist Law, a number of right-wing philistines have been sent to the Reichstag by our people and have begun to throw their weight about, since they are the majority of the parliamentary group. We have to wait and see how far they will go; they can be the tow-rope for a time but not the leaders. They know they haven't got the masses behind them, but they also know the hands of the masses are very tied at present. One thing is sure. If they get the upper hand, I will only go with them to a certain point, then bid them *bon jour, messieurs*.<sup>a</sup> Unfortunately I cannot explode as I would like because of the load of work; but perhaps it is good to give the gentlemen a little elbowroom. The affair over the shipping subvention<sup>154</sup> is still turning out better than we could expect, after some people made fools of themselves. Now they want to do the Zurich *Sozialdemokrat*<sup>155</sup> a bad turn. That is already getting serious. It is enough that we let these gentlemen shame us in the Reichstag, but before all Europe—that won't do at all. If Bebel were well all this would have had little effect, but he is jumpy, unnerved, and also has to work hard for his family....

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> Good day, gentlemen.—Ed.

## Engels to August Bebel

October 28, 1885

...The chronic depression in all the decisive branches of industry also continues here, in France and in America. Especially in iron and cotton. It is an unprecedented situation, though it is the inevitable result of the capitalist system: such colossal over-production that it cannot even bring things to a crisis! The over-production of disposable capital seeking investment is so great that the discount rate here actually fluctuates between 1 and 1½ per cent per annum, and for money invested in short-term credits, which can be paid off or called in any day (money at call) one can hardly get 1/2 per cent per annum. But the fact that the money capitalist prefers to invest his money in this way rather than in new industrial undertakings is an admission that the whole business looks rotten to him. And this fear of new investments and old-time speculation, which already manifested itself in the crisis of 1867, is the main reason why things are not brought to an acute crisis. But it will surely come in the end, and it is to be hoped that it will then make an end of the old trade unions here. These unions have simply retained the craft character which stuck to them from the first and which is becoming more unbearable every day. Presumably you suppose that the engineers, joiners, bricklayers, etc., will without more ado admit any worker belonging to their trade? Not at all. Whoever wants admission must first have been attached as an apprentice for a period of years (usually seven) to some worker belonging to the trade union. This was intended to keep the number of workers limited, but apart from this it was pointless, except that it brought in money to the apprentice's master, for which he actually did nothing in return. This was tolerable up to 1848. But since then the colossal growth of industry has pro-

duced a class of workers of whom there are as many or more as there are "skilled" workers in the trade unions and whose output is similar to that of the "skilled" workers or greater, but who can never become members. These people have been *virtually brought into being* by the craft rules of the trade unions. But do you suppose the unions ever consider doing away with this silly bunk? Not in the least. I cannot recall having read of a single proposal of the kind at a Trade Union Congress. The fools want to reform society to suit themselves but not to reform themselves to suit the development of society. They cling to their traditional superstition, which does them nothing but harm, instead of getting rid of the rubbish and thus doubling their numbers and their power and really becoming again what at present they daily become less—associations of all the workers in a trade against the capitalists. This I think will explain many things to you in the behaviour of these privileged workers.

What is needed here, first of all, is that official workers' leaders should get into Parliament in large numbers. Then it will soon go swimmingly; they will reveal themselves quickly enough. The election in November will do much in this respect. Ten or twelve of them are sure of getting in, unless their Liberal friends play another trick on them at the last minute. The first elections under a new system are always a kind of lottery and reveal only a tiny part of the revolution that has been started by it. But universal suffrage—and the new one here, in the absence of a peasant class and with England's industrial lead, gives the workers the same power as the German—is today the best lever of a proletarian movement and will become so here, too. That is why it is so important to smash the Social-Democratic Federation, the leaders of which are pure political careerists, adventurers, and literatti, as soon as possible. Hyndman, their *chef*, is helping that with might and main; he cannot wait until the clock strikes twelve, as the folk song goes, and daily makes a bigger fool of himself in the chase for success. He is a wretched caricature of Lassalle...

Translated from the German

## Engels to Eduard Bernstein

May 22, 1886

...Our Frenchmen are doing themselves proud. Everyone here<sup>a</sup> is an amateur by comparison. The anarchist stupidities in America<sup>156</sup> may become useful; it is not desirable that the American workers gain *too quick* successes at their present, still quite middle class stage of thinking—higher wages and shorter hours. That could strengthen the one-sided trades union spirit<sup>b</sup> more than necessary.

The Amalgamated Engineers here, the strongest trade union, last year had to pay out over £ 43,000 from their Reserve Fund for unemployed members, the Reserve fell from ca. £ 165,000 to ca. £ 122,000. As soon as the Fund is exhausted, and not before, it may be possible to do something with these people....

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> In England.—*Tr.*

<sup>b</sup> In Engels' text: Trades-Union-Geist.—*Tr.*

## Engels to Friedrich Adolph Sorge

November 29, 1886

...The Henry George boom<sup>157</sup> has of course brought to light a colossal mass of fraud, and I am glad I was not there. But in spite of it all it was an epoch-making day. The Germans do not know how to use their theory as a lever to set the American masses in motion; most of them do not understand the theory themselves and treat it in a doctrinaire and dogmatic way as something that has got to be learned by heart and which will then satisfy all requirements without more ado. To them it is a credo and not a guide to action. What is more, they learn no English on principle. Hence the American masses had to seek out their own path and seem to have found it for the time being in the Knights of Labor,<sup>158</sup> whose confused principles and ludicrous organisation seem to correspond to their own confusion. But from all I hear, the Knights of Labor are a real power, especially in New England and the West, and are becoming more so every day owing to the brutal opposition of the capitalists. I think it is necessary to work inside this organisation, to form within this still quite plastic mass a core of people who understand the movement and its aims and will therefore take over the leadership, at least of a section, when the inevitable, now impending break-up of the present "order" takes place. The worst side of the Knights of Labor was their political neutrality, which has resulted in sheer trickery on the part of the Powderlys, etc.; but the edge of this has been taken off by the behaviour of the masses in the November elections, especially in New York. The first

great step of importance for every country newly entering into the movement is always the constitution of the workers as an independent political party, no matter how, so long as it is a distinct workers' party. And this step has been taken, much more rapidly than we had a right to expect, and that is the main thing. That the first programme of this party is still confused and extremely deficient and that it has raised the banner of Henry George are unavoidable evils but also merely transitory ones. The masses must have time and opportunity to develop, and they have the opportunity only when they have a movement of their own—no matter in what form so long as it is *their own* movement—in which they are driven further by their own mistakes and learn from their experience.

The movement in America is at the same stage as it was in our country before 1848; the really intelligent people there will first have to play the part played by the Communist League among the workers' associations before 1848. Except that in America things will now proceed infinitely faster. For the movement to have gained such election successes after scarcely eight months of existence is wholly unprecedented. And what is still lacking will be set going by the bourgeoisie; nowhere in the whole world do they come out so shamelessly and tyrannically as over there, and your judges brilliantly outshine Bismarck's imperial pettifoggers. Where the bourgeoisie wages the struggle by such methods, a crucial stage is rapidly reached, and if we in Europe do not hurry up the Americans will soon outdistance us. But just now it is doubly necessary that there should be a few people on our side who have a firm grasp of theory and well-tried tactics and can also speak and write English; because for good historical reasons the Americans are worlds behind in all theoretical questions; and although they did not bring over any mediaeval institutions from Europe, they did bring over masses of mediaeval traditions, religion, English common (feudal) law, superstition, spiritualism—in short, every kind of imbecility which was not directly harmful to business and which is now very serviceable for stupefying the masses. If there are some theoretically lucid minds there, who can tell them the consequences of their own



mistakes beforehand and make them understand that every movement which does not keep the destruction of the wage system constantly in view as the final goal is bound to go astray and fail—then much nonsense can be avoided and the process considerably shortened. But it must be done in the English way, the specific German character must be laid aside, and the gentlemen of the *Sozialist* will hardly be capable of doing this, while those of the *Volkszeitung*<sup>a</sup> are cleverer only where *business* is involved.

In Europe the effect of the American elections in November was tremendous. That England and America in particular had no labour movement up to now was the big trump card of the radical republicans everywhere, especially in France. Now these gentlemen are dumbfounded; Mr. Clemenceau in particular saw the whole foundation of his policy collapse on November 2nd. "Look at America", was his eternal motto; "where there is a real republic, there is no poverty and no labour movement!" And the same thing is happening to the Progressives<sup>159</sup> and "democrats" in Germany and here—where they are also witnessing the beginnings of their own movement. The very fact that the movement is so sharply accentuated as a labour movement and has sprung up so suddenly and forcefully has stunned these people completely.

Here the lack of any competition, on the one hand, and the government's stupidity, on the other, have enabled the gentlemen of the Social-Democratic Federation to occupy a position which they did not dare to dream of three months ago. The hubbub about the plan—never intended to be taken seriously—of a parade behind the Lord Mayor's procession on November 9, and later the same hubbub about the Trafalgar Square meeting on November 21, when the mounting of artillery was talked of and the government finally backed down—all this forced the gentlemen of the S. D. F. to hold a very ordinary meeting at last on the 21st, without empty rodomon-tades and pseudo-revolutionary demonstrations with *obligato* mob accompaniment—and the philistines suddenly gained res-

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<sup>a</sup> *New Yorker Volkszeitung*.—Ed.

pect for the people who had stirred up such a fuss and yet behaved so respectably. And since, except for the S.D.F., nobody takes any notice of the unemployed, who constitute a fairly numerous group each winter during the chronic stagnation of business and suffer very acute hardships, the S.D.F. is winning the game hands down. The labour movement is beginning here and no mistake, and if the S.D.F. is the first to reap the harvest that is the result of the cowardice of the radicals and the stupidity of the Socialist League,<sup>160</sup> which is squabbling with the Anarchists and cannot get rid of them, and hence has no time to concern itself with the living movement that is taking place outside under its very nose. Incidentally, how long Hyndman & Co. will persist in their present comparatively rational mode of action is uncertain. Anyhow I expect that they will soon commit colossal blunders again; they're in too much of a hurry. And then they will see that this can't be done in a serious movement...

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 373-75

## Engels to August Bebel

January 5, 1889

...The Possibilists have fought our people, the so-called Marxists, to the death; they have set themselves up as the only saving church, which absolutely forbids any dealing and any co-operation with others—Marxists and Blanquists alike—and have made an alliance with the local saving church (the Social-Democratic Federation), not the least purpose of which is to counteract the German Party everywhere until it joins the simon pure union, and abjures all communion with other Frenchmen and Englishmen. The Possibilists, moreover, have sold out to the present government; their travelling expenses, Congress costs, and newspapers are met from secret funds; and all that on the pretext of fighting Boulanger and standing up for the Republic, and also for the opportunist<sup>161</sup> exploiters of France, the Ferrys, etc., their present allies. And they defend the present Radical Government, which must, in order to remain in office, do any dirty service for the opportunists; which ordered the people to be attacked at Eudes' funeral, and which rises more furiously against the red flag in Bordeaux and Troyes, just as in Paris, than every government before it. To associate with this gang would be to disavow all your former foreign policy. Two years ago this crowd made common cause in Paris against socialist demands with the sold-out English trades unions.<sup>162</sup> And when they acted differently here in November,<sup>163</sup> it was because there was nothing else for it. They are, moreover, only strong in Paris; in the provinces they are nothing. The proof: they cannot hold a congress in Paris, because the provincials will either stay away

or be hostile. Nor can they hold one in the provinces. Two years ago they went to a secluded spot in the Ardennes.<sup>164</sup> This year they thought they'd get fixed up in Troyes, where several worker members of the town council betrayed their class after the elections, and joined them. But these did not get re-elected, and the Committee—their own Committee—in-  
vited *all* French Socialists. Horror in the Paris camp; the attempt to reverse this decision was in vain. And so they did not go to their own Congress, which our Marxists took over and conducted brilliantly. What the trade unions from the provinces think about them is shown by the enclosed resolution of the Bordeaux Trade Union Congress in November.—They have nine men on the City Council in Paris, whose main object is to counter Vaillant's socialist activity on sundry pretexts, to betray the workers, and to get in return money grants, and a monopoly of the labour exchange for themselves and their followers.

The Marxists, who are masters in the provinces, and are the *only* anti-chauvinist party in France, have made themselves unpopular in Paris by their support for the German labour movement; to send delegates to a congress in Paris hostile to them would be to give yourselves a punch in the jaw. They also have the right method for fighting Boulanger, who represents the general discontent in France. When Boulanger wanted to hold a banquet in Montluçon, our people took 300 tickets, in order—through Dormoy, a very capable chap—to put very categorical questions on his position on the labour movement, etc. When the brave General learned of it, he ordered the whole banquet to be called off!...

*Translated from the German*

## Engels to Friedrich Adolph Sorge

June 8, 1889

...With the exception of the Social-Democratic Federation, the Possibilists have not *a single socialist organisation on their side in the whole of Europe*. They have consequently to fall back on the non-socialist trade unions and would give the world if they could have even the old trade unions here, Broadhurst & Co., but the latter were fed up with things here in London in November.<sup>165</sup> From America they will get one Knight of Labor.

The essential point in this context is—and this was the reason why I put my shoulders to the wheel—that it is again the old split in the International that comes to light here, the old battle of the Hague. The adversaries are the same, but the banner of the Anarchists has been replaced by the banner of the Possibilists: the selling of principles to the bourgeoisie for small-scale concessions, especially in return for well-paid jobs for the leaders (on the city councils, labour exchanges, etc.). And the tactics are exactly the same. The manifesto of the Social-Democratic Federation, obviously written by Brousse, is a new edition of the Sonvillier circular.<sup>166</sup> And Brousse knows it too; he continues to attack authoritarian Marxism with the same lies and slanders, and Hyndman is imitating him—his principal sources of information about the International and the political activity of Marx are the local malcontents of the General Council: Eccarius, Jung & Co.

The alliance of the Possibilists and the Social-Democratic Federation was to constitute the nucleus of a new International that was to be founded in Paris: with the Germans, if

they joined as the third member of the league,\* otherwise against them. Hence the many little congresses one after another, constantly growing in number; hence the exclusionism with which the allies treated all the other French and English tendencies as non-existent; and hence the intrigues, particularly with those small little nations, which also were Bakunin's support. But the people engaged in this activity became alarmed when the Germans, with their St. Gall resolution,<sup>167</sup> also entered the congress movement, quite naively—in absolute ignorance of what was going on elsewhere. And since these small people preferred to go against the Germans rather than with them—for the latter were considered far too Marxified—the struggle became inevitable. But you have no idea how naive the Germans are. It has cost me tremendous effort to make even Bebel understand what it is all really about, although the Possibilists know it very well and proclaim it every day. And with all these mistakes I had little hope that things would work out well, that immanent reason, which is gradually evolving to consciousness of itself in this affair, would win out as early as this. I am all the more pleased by the proof that today occurrences like those of 1873 and 1874 can no longer happen. The intriguers are beaten already, and the significance of the congress—whether it entails another one or not—lies in the fact that the unanimity of the socialist parties in Europe is demonstrated to all the world, and the few plotters left out in the cold unless they submit....

Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 382-83

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\* An allusion to Schiller's poem "Die Bürgschaft".—*Ed.*

## Engels to Friedrich Adolph Sorge

December 7, 1889

...Over here it is being proved that it is not so easy to cram doctrines and dogmas into the heads of a great nation, even if one has the best of theories, evolved out of their own conditions of life, and even if one has relatively better crammers than the Socialist Labour Party has. Now the movement *has* at last been set going and, I believe, for good. But it is not directly socialist, and those among the English who have understood our theory best remain outside it: Hyndman because he is incorrigibly jealous and loves intriguing, Bax because he is a bookworm. Formally, the movement is first of all a trade union movement, but utterly different from that of the *old* Trade Unions of skilled labourers, the labour aristocracy. The people are making a much greater effort than before now, they are drawing far greater masses into the struggle, shaking up society far more profoundly, and putting forward much more far-reaching demands: the eight-hour day, a general federation of all organisations, and complete solidarity. Through Tussy,\* the Gas-Workers' and General Labourers' Union<sup>168</sup> has got women's branches *for the first time*. Moreover, the people regard their immediate demands as only provisional, although they themselves do not yet know toward what final goal they are working. But this vague notion has a strong enough hold on them to make them elect as leaders *only* downright Socialists. Like everyone else, they must learn by their own experiences, from the consequences of their own mistakes. But since, unlike the old Trade Unions, they greet every suggestion of the identity of interest between capital and labour with scornful laughter, this will not take very long. I

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\* Eleanor Marx-Aveling.—Ed.

hope the next general election is not called for another three years: 1) so that at the height of the war danger the Russian toady Gladstone is not at the helm— which alone would be enough for the Tsar<sup>a</sup> to provoke a war; 2) so that the anti-conservative majority grows so large that *genuine* Home Rule<sup>169</sup> for Ireland becomes a necessity, for otherwise Gladstone will again diddle the Irish and this obstacle—the Irish question—will not be put out of the way; 3) and so that the labour movement develops still more and possibly matures more quickly under the effects of the bad times for business that are sure to follow the current prosperity. Then the next Parliament might count 20 to 40 labour members, and of a stamp different from that of Potter, Cremer & Co.

The most repugnant thing here is the bourgeois “respectability”, which has grown deep into the bones of the workers! The division of society into innumerable strata, each recognised without question, each with its own pride but also its in-born respect for its “betters” and “superiors”, is so old and firmly established that the bourgeois still find it fairly easy to get their bait accepted. I am not at all sure, for instance, that John Burns is not secretly prouder of his popularity with Cardinal Manning, the Lord Mayor,<sup>b</sup> and the bourgeoisie in general than of his popularity with his own class. And Champion—an ex-lieutenant—has always intrigued with bourgeois and especially with conservative elements, preached socialism at the parsons’ Church Congress, etc. And even Tom Mann, whom I regard as the best of the lot, is fond of mentioning that he will be lunching with the Lord Mayor. If one compares this with the French, one realises what a revolution is good for after all. For the rest, it will be of little use to the bourgeoisie to lure a few leaders into its snares. By then the movement will have grown strong enough to cope with such things....

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> Alexander III.—*Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> Henry Aaron Isaacs.—*Ed.*



## Engels to Hermann Schlüter

January 11, 1890

...The stormy tide of the movement last summer has somewhat abated. And the best of it is that the unthinking sympathy for the labour movement, which was expressed by the middle-class mob during the dockers' strike,<sup>170</sup> has also abated, and is beginning to make way for the far more natural feeling of distrust and uneasiness. In the South London gas strike,<sup>171</sup> which was forced on the workers by the gas company, the workers once more find themselves entirely deserted by all the philistines. This is very good and I only hope Burns will some day go through this experience himself, in a strike led by himself—he cherishes all sorts of illusions on that score.

There is, moreover, all kind of friction, as was only to be expected, between the gas-workers and the dockers, for instance. But despite it all the masses are on the move and there is no holding them back any more. The longer the stream is dammed up the more powerful will be the breakthrough when it comes. And these unskilled workers are very different fellows from the fossilised men of the old Trade Unions; not a trace of the old formalist spirit and of the craft exclusiveness of the engineers,<sup>172</sup> for example; on the contrary, a general call for the organisation of *all* Trade Unions into *one* brotherhood and for a direct struggle against capital. In the dock strike, for instance, there were *three* engineers at the Commercial Docks who kept the steam-engine going. Burns and Mann—both are engineers, and Burns is a member of the Executive of the Amalgamated Engineers Trade Union—were

asked to persuade the men to leave, as then none of the cranes could have worked and the dock company would have had to climb down. The three engineers refused, the Engineers' Executive did not intervene and hence the length of the strike! Furthermore, at the Silvertown Rubber Works, where there was a twelve weeks' strike,<sup>173</sup> the strike failed because of the engineers, who did not join in and even did labourers' work *against* their own union rules! And why? "In order to keep the supply of workers low", these fools have a rule that *nobody who has not been through the regular period of apprenticeship* may be admitted to their union. By this means they have created an army of rivals, so-called black-legs, who are just as skilled as they themselves and who would gladly join the union, but who are forced to remain black-legs because they are kept outside by this pedantry which has no sense at all nowadays. And because they knew that both in the Commercial Docks and in Silvertown these black-legs would immediately have stepped into their place, they stayed on and so became black-legs themselves against the strikers. There you see the difference: the new unions stick together; in the present gas strike, sailors and (steamers') firemen, lightermen and coal carters, etc., are all united, but, of course, again not the engineers; they continue working!

However, these old swaggering large Trade Unions will soon be made to look small; their mainstay, the London Trade Council,<sup>174</sup> is being gradually conquered by the *new* Trade Unions, and in two or three years at most the Trades Union Congress will also be revolutionised. Even at the next Congress the Broadhursts will get the surprise of their lives....

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 388-89

## Engels to Friedrich Adolph Sorge

February 8, 1890

...We, too, have our nationalists here, the Fabians—a well-meaning gang of “edicated”<sup>a</sup> bourgeois who have overruled Marx with Jevons’s worthless vulgar political economy, so vulgar, in fact, that anything can be made of it, even socialism. Its main purpose, as across the ocean, is to convert the *bourgeoisie* to socialism and thus introduce the thing peacefully and constitutionally. They have published a fat book about it written by seven authors.<sup>175</sup>...

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> Engels uses the Berlin dialectal form “Jebildeten” for “Gebildeten” (educated).—*Ed.*

## Engels to Leo Frankel

December 25, 1890

...So much for the ceremony, and now down to the main point of your letter. Your view of the French squabbling, quite understandable owing to your long absence from the French movement, was already clear to me from your articles in the *Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung*, which had been sent to me from Berlin. The squabbling is no less regrettable and no less unavoidable than was the squabbling between the Lassalleans and the Eisenachers simply because in both cases sly harpies had put themselves at the head of one of the two factions, using the party for their own practical interests as long as the party put up with it; that is why one cannot work with Brousse and Co. any more than one could with Schweitzer, Hasselmann and their associates. If you had but fought the battle through from the beginning in every detail as I have, it would have been as clear to you as it is to me that here uniting would above all mean surrendering to a gang of intriguers and office-hunters who have been continually betraying the Party's true principles and time-tested methods of struggle to the ruling bourgeoisie ... in order to win positions for themselves and small, insignificant gains for those workers who follow them. Uniting would therefore be tantamount to an utter surrender to these gentlemen. The proceedings at the Paris Congress of 1889<sup>176</sup> have confirmed this too.

Unity will come about exactly as it did in Germany, but it will not be enduring unless the battle is fought to the end, the differences are ironed out, and the rogues are given the boot by their own followers. When the Germans were close to unit-

ing, Liebknecht advocated unity at any price. We were against this: the Lassalleans were about to collapse, one had only to wait for the process to run its course and union would come to itself. Marx wrote a long critique of the so-called unity programme, and hand-written copies of it were circulated.<sup>2</sup>

Our advice went unheeded. The result: we had had to take Hasselmann into our midst, to rehabilitate him before the whole world, and then throw him out as the scoundrel that he was six months later. And we had had to incorporate the Lassallean stupidities in the programme and thus positively ruin it. This was a twofold shame, which could have been avoided with a little more patience.

In France, the Possibilists are undergoing exactly the same process of disintegration as the Lassalleans were in 1875. The leaders of *both* currents that resulted from the split<sup>177</sup> are, in my opinion, worthless people of no consequence. As I see it, this process, in which the *leaders* are devouring each other but which is giving us the mass of members who are essentially good, can be hindered or delayed – if not halted entirely – only if we make *one* mistake, namely, if we try uniting prematurely....

Translated from the Hungarian

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<sup>2</sup> K. Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (see present edition, pp. 120-42). – Ed.

## Engels to August Bebel

July 23, 1892

...The Vollmariade has shown once more that the man has lost all touch with the Party.<sup>178</sup> If not this year then the next it will probably come to a break with him. He seems to want to cram the state socialist inanities down the Party's throat. But since he is a wily intriguer, and since I have had all kinds of experience in grappling with that sort of people—for Marx and I have made many a tactical blunder dealing with such characters and have had to pay for it—I take the liberty here to give you a few tips.

These people are above all bent on putting us *formally* in the wrong, and that is something we must avoid. Otherwise, they will harp upon this side-issue in order to obfuscate the main point, whose weakness they sense. So take care of what you say in public as well as privately. You have seen how adroitly the bloke used your remark about Liebknecht<sup>179</sup> to stir up trouble between the two of you—for he knows your attitude to each other perfectly well—and thereby put you between two stools.

Second, since their main aim is to obfuscate the basic issue, they must be denied the opportunity to do so; all the side-issues that *they* bring up must be dealt with as curtly and conclusively as possible so as to put them out of the way once and for all. *We*, on the other hand, must as far as possible steer clear of any by-ways and side-issues, however tempting they may appear. Otherwise, the range of the debate will grow ever wider and the initial point of dispute will drop more and more out of the field of vision. Then a decisive vic-

tory will no longer be possible. That alone will be enough of a success for the schemer, and for us at least a moral setback.

The third follows from the first and second: *pure defence* is the best tactic against these people until they themselves put their foot in it properly—whereupon a short and devastating artillery bombardment and a decisive bayonet charge. Here more than anywhere else one must save ammunition and reserves until the last.

Whenever we departed from these rules in the fight against Bakuninists, Proudhonists, German professors, and similar rabble, we have to do penance for it. That is why I am here—with laying them before you once again....

Translated from the German

## Engels to Karl Kautsky

September 4, 1892

...In our tactics one thing is firmly established for all modern countries and times: to convince the workers of the necessity of forming their own independent party, opposed to all bourgeois parties. During the last elections the English workers compelled by the course of events took a determined step in this direction for the first time and perhaps still only instinctively and this step has been surprisingly successful and has contributed more to the development of the minds of the workers than any other event during the last twenty years. And what did the Fabians<sup>180</sup> do, not just this or that Fabian but the Society as a whole? It preached and practised *affiliation of the workers to the Liberals*, and what was to be expected happened: the Liberals assigned them four seats impossible to win and the Fabian candidates conspicuously failed. The paradoxical man of letters Shaw—very talented and witty as a writer but absolutely useless as an economist and politician, although honest and not a careerist—wrote to Bebel that if they did not follow this policy of forcing their candidates on the Liberals they would reap nothing but defeat and disgrace (as if defeat were not often more honourable than victory) and now they have pursued their policy and have reaped both.

That is the crux of the whole matter. At a juncture when the workers for the first time come out independently, the Fabian Society advises them to remain the tail of the Liberals. And the Socialists on the Continent must be told that openly. To gloss this over would be to share the blame. That's why I



was sorry that the final portion of the Avelings' article did not appear.<sup>181</sup> It was not written *post festum*<sup>a</sup> not as an afterthought. It had simply been overlooked in the rush to get the article off. The article is not complete without a description of the attitude of both socialist organisations<sup>b</sup> towards the elections, and the readers of the *Neue Zeit* have a right to know about this.

I believe I told you myself in my last letter that both in the Social-Democratic Federation and in the Fabian Society the provincial members were better than the central body. But that is of no avail as long as the attitude of the central body determines that of the Society. I don't know any of the other fine chaps except Banner. Curiously enough Banner has never come to see me since he joined the Fabian Society. I suppose his action was determined by his disgust with the Social-Democratic Federation and the need for some kind of organisation, perhaps also some illusions. But this swallow makes no summer.

You see something unfinished in the Fabian Society. On the contrary, this crowd is only *too* finished: a clique of middle-class "Socialists" of diverse calibres, from careerists to sentimental Socialists and philanthropists, united only by their fear of the threatening rule of the workers and doing all in their power to avert this danger by making *their own* leadership secure, the leadership exercised by the "eddicated".<sup>c</sup> If afterwards they admit a few workers into their central board in order that they may play there the role of the worker Albert of 1848, the role of constantly outvoted minority, this should not deceive anyone.

The means employed by the Fabian Society are just the same as those of the corrupt parliamentary politicians: money, intrigues, careerism. That is, the English way, according to which it is self-understood that every political party (only among the workers it is supposed to be different!) pays

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<sup>a</sup> After the event.—*Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> The Fabian Society and the Social-Democratic Federation.—*Ed.*

<sup>c</sup> Engels uses the Berlin dialectal form "Jebildeten" for "Gebildeten" (educated).—*Ed.*

its agents in some way or other or rewards them with posts. These people are immersed up to their neck in the intrigues of the Liberal Party, hold Liberal Party jobs, as for instance Sidney Webb, who in general is a genuine British politician. These gentry do everything that the workers have to be warned against.

In spite of all this I do not ask you to treat these people as enemies. But in my opinion you should not shield them from criticism either, just as you don't shield anybody else. And that is precisely what the omission of the passages concerning them in the article by the Avelings looked like. But if you would like the Avelings to give you an article on the history and attitude of the different English socialist organisations, you only have to say so and I'll propose it to them.

I very much liked your article about Vollmar. It does him more harm than all the squabbling in *Vorwärts*. It was also high time to reprove the endless threats of expulsion. Those are now quite untimely reminders of the dictatorial times of the Anti-Socialist Law. These days, the rotten elements must be given time to rot on until they all but drop out by themselves. A party with millions of followers has an entirely different discipline from that of a sect of a few hundred. What you could have dwelt on a bit more was the way "state socialism *per se*" in practice, and this in the only place where it is in effect possible, namely in Prussia (which you have demonstrated very nicely), is *unavoidably* reduced to fiscality...

Translated from the German

## Engels to August Bebel

November 6, 1892

...But you are being literally boycotted here out of *pure English chauvinism*. The people here are badly annoyed that there is a labour movement in Germany which acts quite differently from the English, ignoring all the hallowed trades-union and political parliamentary procedures that are gospel here, and which, for all this, goes from victory to victory. I speak not of the bourgeoisie. The old trades unions see each of your successes as a setback for themselves and their mode of operation. The Fabians are annoyed that you are getting ahead *in spite of* making war on all bourgeois radicals. The leaders of the Social-Democratic Federation hate you, because you refuse to fall in with their intrigues and to join them in the mutual admiration society which *Justice* has for years tried to foist on you by carrot and stick. Given the extreme ignorance of the English masses about things abroad, and given their congenital arrogance, due to which the foreigner is considered a second-class creature and all foreign events are treated with indifference, things can easily be consigned to total silence. In matters that concern labour, the *Chronicle*<sup>a</sup> is in the hands of the Fabians. *Justice* is committed to the louse Gilles through Hyndman. The *Workman's Times*, too, believes that nothing can be done without the groundwork of a large trades-union organisation in the English sense. So where, in the circumstances, can one get anything published? Only in the bourgeois press as news of general interest. If we had a

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<sup>a</sup> *Daily Chronicle*.—Ed.

paper open to us for a year for plain reports about the German movement, there would be an end to this, for there is enough latent internationalist spirit that needs only to be nourished to overcome the stupid British arrogance, at least among a considerable number. But alas!

The *Workman's Times* threatens to fold up. There is something behind that, and we are trying to get to the bottom of it. Things of that sort do not ever happen here without some knavery.

Now, *ad vocem*<sup>a</sup> Vollmar. As I see it, the attack on the man was very clumsy indeed. It fell foul of the word "state socialism". The word expresses no clear concept, and is, like "social question" and so on, no more than a journalistic figure of speech, a mere phrase that may connote anything and nothing. It is of no earthly use to argue about the true meaning of such a word; its true sense, in fact, is that it makes no sense. *Neue Zeit* could not very well avoid examining this spurious concept, and what Karl Kautsky said about it was, indeed, pretty good (except that he, too, thinks that it absolutely should have a *true meaning*).<sup>182</sup> But in the political debate we are doing Vollmar an enormous and entirely superfluous favour by squabbling with him over *what* state socialism is and is not—that is like running around in circles and engaging in senseless political twaddle. At the Party congress, as I see it, we should say: dear Vollmar, we don't care what you mean by state socialism; you have said this and that about the government and our attitude to it, and there we take you at your word; it is as much contrary to the tactics of the Party as the rhetoric of the Independents, and *that is where we call you to account*. His downright bootlicking of William and Caprivi is the only vulnerable thing, very vulnerable at that—and to this I wanted to call your attention before the Party congress....

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> As regards.—Ed.

## Engels to Friedrich Adolph Sorge

December 31, 1892

...Here in old Europe things are a little livelier than in your "youthful" country, which still doesn't quite want to grow out of its hobbledehoy stage. It is remarkable but wholly natural how firmly rooted bourgeois prejudices are even in the working class in such a young country, which has never known feudalism and has grown up on a bourgeois basis from the beginning. Out of his very opposition to the mother country—which still wears its feudal disguise—the American worker, too, imagines that the traditional bourgeois regime he inherited is something progressive and superior by nature and for all time, a *nec-plus ultra*.<sup>a</sup> Just as in New England Puritanism, the reason for the whole colony's existence, has for that very reason become an heirloom and almost inseparable from local patriotism. The Americans may strain and struggle as much as they like, but they simply cannot discount their future—colossally great as it is—like a bill of exchange; they must wait for the date on which it falls due; and just *because* their future is so great, their present must be occupied mainly with preparatory work for that future, and this work, as in every young country, is of a predominantly material nature and involves a certain backwardness of thought, a clinging to the traditions connected with the foundation of the new nationality....

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
p. 426

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<sup>a</sup> Acme of perfection.—*Ed.*

## Engels to Friedrich Adolph Sorge

January 18, 1893

...The Fabians here in London are a band of careerists who have enough sense to realise that the social revolution is inevitable, but who could not possibly entrust this gigantic task to the crude proletariat alone and have thus acquired the habit of setting themselves at the head. Fear of the revolution is their fundamental principle. They are the "eddicated" *par excellence*. Their socialism is municipal socialism; not the nation but the *commune* is to become the owner of the means of production, at least provisionally. This socialism of theirs is then represented as an extreme but inevitable consequence of middle-class liberalism; hence their tactics of not decisively opposing the Liberals as adversaries but of pushing them on towards socialist conclusions and therefore of intriguing with them, of *permeating* liberalism with socialism – of not putting up socialist candidates against the Liberals but of foisting and forcing them upon the Liberals, or cajoling the latter into taking them. They do not realise of course that in doing this they are either told a pack of lies and imposed on by others or else they themselves are lying about socialism.

With great industry they have produced amid all sorts of rubbish some good propaganda writing as well, in fact the best the English have produced in this field. But as soon as they turn to their specific tactics of hushing up the class struggle, it becomes rotten. Hence, too, their fanatical hatred of Marx and all of us – because of the class struggle.

These people naturally have many bourgeois followers and therefore money, and many capable workers in the provinces

who do not want to have anything to do with the Social-Democratic Federation. But five-sixths of the provincial members have more or less the same views as we do, and will certainly drop out at the critical moment. In Bradford—where they are represented—they have repeatedly and resolutely spoken against the London executive of the Fabians.

As you see, this is a critical point for the movement here, and something can come out of the new organisation. For a moment it was close to falling under the wing of Champion, who is consciously or unconsciously working for the Tories just as the Fabians are for the Liberals—under his wing and that of his ally Maltman Barry whom you must know from The Hague (Barry is now a self-confessed and permanent<sup>a</sup> paid Tory agent and manager of the Socialistic Wing of the Conservatives<sup>183</sup>) as you will see from the *Workman's Times* of November and December. But Champion has in the end preferred to resume publishing his *Labour Elector* and thus put himself at loggerheads with the *Workman's Times* and the new party....

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> A play on words: *geständiger* (self-confessed) und *ständiger* (permanent).—*Ed.*

## Engels to Friedrich Adolph Sorge

November 10, 1894

...The movement over here still resembles the American movement, save that it is *somewhat* ahead of you. The mass instinct that the workers must form a party of their own against the two official parties is getting stronger and stronger; this was more apparent than ever in the municipal elections on November 1. But all kinds of old traditional memories and a lack of people capable of transforming this instinct into conscious action that will embrace the entire country tends to keep the workers in this preliminary stage which is marked by haziness of thought and local isolation of action. Anglo-Saxon sectarianism prevails in the labour movement, too. The Social-Democratic Federation, just like your German Socialist Workers' Party,<sup>184</sup> has managed to transform our theory into the rigid dogma of an orthodox sect; it is narrow-mindedly exclusive and, thanks to Hyndman, has a thoroughly rotten tradition in international politics, which is shaken from time to time, to be sure, but which has not yet been thrown overboard. The Independent Labour Party<sup>185</sup> is extremely vague in its tactics, and its leader, Keir Hardie, is a supercunning Scot, whose demagogic tricks can not be trusted for a minute. Although he is a poor devil of a Scottish coal miner, he has founded a big weekly, *The Labour Leader*, which could not have been established without considerable money, and he is getting this money from Tory or Liberal-Unionist,<sup>186</sup> that is, anti-Gladstone and anti-Home Rule sources. There can be no doubt about this, and his notorious literary connections in London as well as direct reports and his political attitude con-



firm it. As a result of this, it is possible that owing to desertions by Irish and radical voters, he may very easily lose his seat in Parliament at the 1895 general elections<sup>187</sup> and that would be a stroke of good luck—the man is the greatest obstacle at present. He appears in Parliament only on demagogic occasions, in order to cut a figure with phrases about the unemployed—without getting anything done—or to address imbecilities to the Queen<sup>a</sup> on the occasion of the birth of a prince,<sup>b</sup> which is infinitely banal and cheap in this country, and so forth. Otherwise there are very good elements both in the Social-Democratic Federation and in the Independent Labour Party, especially in the provinces, but they are scattered; yet they have at least managed to foil all the efforts of the leaders to incite the two organisations against each other. John Burns stands pretty much alone politically; he is being viciously attacked both by Hyndman and by Keir Hardie and acts as if he despaired of the political organisation of the workers and set his hopes solely on the trade unions. To be sure, he has had bad experiences with the former and might starve if the Engineers' Union did not pay him his Parliamentary salary. He is vain and has allowed the Liberals, that is, the “social wing” of the radicals, to lead him a bit too much by the nose. He attaches altogether too much importance to the numerous individual concessions that he has forced through, but with all that he is the only really honest fellow in the whole movement, that is, among the leaders, and he has a thoroughly proletarian instinct which will, I believe, guide him more correctly at the decisive moment than cunning and selfish calculation will the others.

On the Continent success is developing the appetite for more success, and catching the peasant, in the literal sense of the word, is becoming the fashion. First the French, in Nantes, declare through Lafargue not only that it is not our business to hasten by our direct interference the ruin of the small peasants (I had written this to them), which capitalism

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<sup>a</sup> Victoria.—*Ed.*

<sup>b</sup> An allusion to Edward Albert.—*Ed.*

is seeing to for us, but also that we must directly *protect* the small peasant against taxation, usury, and landlords. But we cannot co-operate in this, first because it is stupid and second because it is impossible. Next however Vollmar comes along in Frankfurt and wants to bribe the *peasantry as a whole*, and moreover the peasant he has to deal with in Upper Bavaria is not the debt-ridden small peasant of the Rhineland, but the middle and even the big peasant, who exploits male and female farmhands and sells cattle and grain in quantity. And that cannot be done without giving up the whole principle. We can win over the Alpine peasants and the Lower Saxon and Schleswig-Holstein big peasants only if we sacrifice the fieldhands and day labourers to them, and in doing that we lose more politically than we gain. The Frankfurt Party Congress did not take a stand on this question, and that is to the good in so far as the matter will now be studied thoroughly; the people who were there knew far too little about the peasantry and rural conditions, which differ so fundamentally in different provinces, to have been able to do anything but make random decisions. But the matter has to be settled some time all the same....

Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*,  
pp. 449-50

## Engels to Paul Lafargue

November 22, 1894

... In fact, you have let yourself drift a bit too far toward the opportunists. In Nantes you were on the point of sacrificing the party's future for a mere day's success. It is not too late to stop you, and if my article<sup>a</sup> can help, I would be more than pleased. In Germany, where Vollmar has seen fit to address the benefits that you have promised the French small farmers to the prosperous Bavarian farmers with their ten to thirty hectares—in Germany, Bebel has taken up the challenge and the matter will be thoroughly thrashed out and will not be struck off the agenda until it is settled. In *Vorwärts* you must have read Bebel's speech in the 2nd election district of Berlin.<sup>188</sup> He complains rightly that the party is going bourgeois. That is the trouble with all radical parties the moment they become "possible". Ours, however, cannot overstep a certain boundary in this respect without turning traitor to itself, and it seems to me that in France, as in Germany, we have come to that point. Fortunately, there is still time to call a halt....

Translated from the French

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<sup>a</sup> F. Engels, *The Peasant Question in France and Germany* (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3; pp. 457-77; present edition, pp. 194-208).—Ed.

## Engels to Wilhelm Liebknecht

November 24, 1894

...I have written Bebel and impressed upon him that in political debates one ought to think things over calmly and not do anything in haste or in the heat of the moment, especially because I myself have burnt my fingers in that way many a time. But in that respect I now also have a little admonition to address to you.

Whether Bebel behaved *clumsily* at the meeting is open to question.<sup>2</sup> But in substance he was decidedly right. In any case, as editor of the central organ you are obliged to smooth things over, to talk away even really existing differences, to make things pleasant all round, and work on for the party's unity until the very day of the split. In that sense, Bebel's behaviour may have been embarrassing to you as *editor*. But what was disagreeable to the *editor*, should have been agreeable to the *party leader*, namely, that there are people whom who do not always have to wear the obligatory editorial eye-glasses, and who also remind the *editor* that in his capacity of party leader he would do well to look at the world over his coloured glasses with his own natural eyes from time to time.

The Bavarians formed a regular *Sonderbund*<sup>3</sup> in November directly before the Frankfurt party congress.<sup>4</sup> They came to Frankfurt with an unmistakable ultimatum. But both Heinrich Vollmar spoke of *marching separately*, and *Kautsky* said: *stretch whatever you wish, we will not obey*. They proclaimed themselves for Bavaria and treated their adversaries in the party as

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<sup>2</sup> Karl Gellert's version. See

"Prussians" or "Berliners". They demanded approval of their vote for the budget and of a peasant policy that is farther *right* than that of the petty bourgeoisie. Instead of putting a vigorous stop to this, as was always done before, the party congress did not venture to adopt any resolution. If that was not the time for Bebel to speak up about the petty bourgeois element pressing forward in the party, then I do not know what was.

And what did *Vorwärts* do? It took issue with the form of Bebel's attack, said the matter was of little consequence, and put itself so much in "diametrical opposition" to him that only the thereafter unavoidable "misunderstandings" of Bebel's adversaries compelled you to state that your diametrical opposition referred only to the *form* of Bebel's attack, while he had been right in substance—concerning the budget business and the peasant question—and you were on his side. The very fact that you were *subsequently forced* to make this statement should, I think, prove to you that you have strayed much farther to the right than Bebel may have strayed to the left.

After all, the whole controversy revolves round the attitude of the Bavarians on these two points: the opportunism of voting for the budget to win the petty bourgeoisie, and the opportunism of Vollmar's peasant propaganda to win the middle and the prosperous farmers. This and the *Sonderbund* posture of the Bavarians are the only practical issues under consideration, and if Bebel tackled them where the congress had failed the party, you should be grateful to him. If he portrayed the insufferable situation created by the congress as an effect of the growing philistinism in the party, he was only putting the special issue in the right general perspective, and that too ought to be acknowledged. And if he forced a controversy on the Party, he was only doing his damned duty and seeing to it that the next congress should be in possession of the facts when it deals with urgent issues of the kind that had taken the wind out of the sails of the one in Frankfurt.

The danger of a split does not come from Bebel, who has called things by their right name. It comes from the Bavar-

ians who saw fit to comport themselves in a way heretofore unheard-of in the party and which aroused jubilation among the vulgar democrats of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*,<sup>192</sup> who recognised Vollmar and the Bavarians as *their own*; they are pleased and have become still more insolent.

You say Vollmar is no traitor. That may be. I do not think either that he considers himself a traitor. But what do you call a person who wants a proletarian party to perpetuate the present situation of the Upper Bavarian prosperous and middle farmers who own 10 to 30 hectares of land, based on the exploitation of farm hands and day labourers. A proletarian party expressly founded to perpetuate wage slavery! The man may be anything—an anti-Semite, a bourgeois democrat, a Bavarian particularist—but a Social-Democrat he certainly is not. To be sure, the accession of petty-bourgeois elements to a *growing workers' party* is unavoidable and does no harm, any more than the growing number of “academics”,<sup>a</sup> failed students, and so on. They were a danger a few years ago. Nowadays, we are able to digest them. But the digestive process must be allowed to run its proper course. That calls for hydrochloric acid; if there is not enough at hand (as was the case in Frankfurt), Bebel is only to be thanked for supplying it to enable us to properly digest the non-proletarian elements.

That, indeed, is how true harmony is achieved in the party, and not by disavowing or hushing up every real internal controversial issue.

You say it is a question of “bringing about effective action”. That would please me very much, but when exactly will this action begin?...

Translated from the German

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<sup>a</sup> People with a higher education.—*Ed.*

## Engels to Friedrich Adolph Sorge

December 4, 1894

...The Bavarians, who have become very opportunistic and are by now *almost* an ordinary people's party (i. e. most of the leaders and many of the newcomers to the party), have voted for the whole budget in the Bavarian Landtag, while Vollmar has mounted a peasant agitation campaign to win over the Upper Bavarian prosperous farmers with 25 to 80 acres (10 to 30 hectares) of land, who therefore *cannot cope without wage labourers—instead of trying to win over their farm hands*. They did not expect any good to come of the Frankfurt congress.<sup>193</sup> So, *a week before* it opened, they organised a special Bavarian congress,<sup>194</sup> and there constituted a regular *Sonderbund*<sup>195</sup> by agreeing among themselves that on all Bavarian issues the Bavarian delegates in Frankfurt would vote *as a body* in keeping with the Bavarian resolutions which they had thrashed out beforehand. So, they came and declared that they had *had* to approve the whole budget in Bavaria, that there was nothing they could do about it; besides, it was a purely Bavarian affair in which others had no business to meddle. In other words: if you pass any resolutions that are disagreeable to us Bavarians, if you reject our ultimatum, and if this results in a split, the fault will be yours.

With these pretensions, hitherto unheard-of in the party, they faced the other delegates, who were unprepared for it. And since the shouting for unity had been encouraged to success in recent years, it was small wonder that, given the many recently admitted, not yet fully trained elements, this posture, which the party cannot tolerate if it wants to survive, slipped

through without the due firm rebuff, and no resolution was passed on the budget question.

Now, supposing the Prussians, who have the majority at the party congress, should also hold a preliminary congress and should draw up resolutions on the posture of the Bavarians or on something else binding for all Prussian delegates, so that all of them, the majority as well as the minority, vote in a body for these resolutions at the general congress—what earthly use would it then be to convene a general congress? And what would the Bavarians say if the Prussians did exactly what they themselves have just done?

In short, the matter could not be allowed to rest, and so Bebel leaped into the breach. He put the question on the agenda again, and now it is being discussed. Bebel's is by far the clearest and the most far-sighted mind of them all; I am corresponding with him regularly for something like 15 years, and almost always we see eye to eye. Liebknecht, on the other hand, is badly shrivelled in his ideas. The old south-German federalist and particularist democrat keeps popping up in him, and what is worse, he cannot bear it that Bebel, who has long since outgrown him, is glad to suffer him at his side but will no longer be led by him. Besides, he has so poorly organised *Vorwärts*, the central organ—largely out of jealousy for his leadership, for he wants to direct everything and in fact directs nothing, thus only obstructing everything—that the paper, which could be the first in Berlin, is good only for giving the party 50,000 marks in profits but no political influence. Now, of course, Liebknecht is eager to mediate and is berating Bebel, but in my opinion the latter is right. The board and the best people in Berlin are already on his side, and I am sure that if he turned to the party masses he would have a large majority behind him. For the moment it is a question of biding time....

Translated from the German



## Engels to Paul Stumpf

January 3, 1895

...The party differences have not really disturbed me, for it is much better that this should occur from time to time and should be properly thrashed out rather than that people should fall asleep. Owing to the steady and irrepressible expansion of the party, the new elements are harder to digest than those who joined before. We already have the workers of the big cities, hence the most intelligent and wide-awake, while those who come to us now are either workers from the small towns and rural areas or students, clerks, and so on, or petty bourgeois and rural artisans who are struggling against ruin and who still own or lease a patch of land, and in addition now also the real small farmers. And since our party is in fact the only truly progressive party and, moreover, the only party that is strong enough to make any headway, there is a distinct temptation to preach a bit of socialism to the middle and prosperous farmers, who are deep in debt and are becoming rebellious, especially in those rural areas where these people predominate. Possibly, the limits within which this is in principle tolerable for our party are being overstepped, which sets off some squabbling; but our party has so sound a constitution that all this can do no harm. In substance, nobody is so foolish as to really want to part ways with the large mass of the party, and nobody is so conceited as to think that *alongside* our large party he could form another, small, private party like the dissenters of the Swabian People's Party<sup>196</sup> who were lucky to increase their numbers from seven to eleven Swabians. All this squabbling only serves to disappoint the bour-

geoisie who have been counting on a split on and off for now twenty years and themselves attending to it during the same twenty years that not even the danger of a split should arise among us. So too with the subversion bill,<sup>197</sup> with Liebknecht's rising to become a champion of the rights of the Reichstag and the imperial constitution,<sup>198</sup> and with the threats of a coup d'état and breach of law from above. There is no denying that we, too, commit stupidities, but to enable such opponents to defeat us we would have to be of a truly bovine stupidity that you cannot buy for all the money in the world these days. To be sure, your plan of letting the younger generation take the party helm for once, so that they should run aground, would not be bad at all, but I believe that they will gain sense and experience even without such an experiment....

Translated from the German

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The reference is to utopian socialists of the early 19th century.  
p. 26
- <sup>2</sup> The *National Association of United Trades* was set up in England in 1845. It confined itself to an economic campaign for better terms of selling labour power and better factory law. It functioned till the early 1860s, but after 1851 its role in the trade union movement was a minor one.  
p. 27
- <sup>3</sup> *The Northern Star*—leading Chartist weekly published from 1837 to 1852, first in Leeds and from November 1844 in London.  
p. 32
- <sup>4</sup> The *International Working Men's Association* (subsequently the First International) was established on September 28, 1864 at a public meeting prepared by London trade union leaders and a group of Paris workers, supporters of Proudhon, with the assistance of German and Italian workers and the active petty-bourgeois and revolutionary-democratic émigrés then residing in London. Marx became member of the Provisional Committee elected by the meeting and later of the commission appointed to draw up programme documents of the Association. On October 27, the commission approved the Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association written by Marx.  
p. 34.
- <sup>5</sup> The working class of England fought for the legislative restriction of the working day to ten hours from the end of the 18th century; from the 1830s onwards the struggle embraced broad proletarian masses.  
The Ten Hours' Bill for juveniles and women was passed by Parliament on June 8, 1847. Many factory-owners, however, ignored it.  
p. 36

- <sup>6</sup> The reference is to the speech of Prime Minister Lord Palmerston on June 23, 1863 during a Parliamentary debate on the Irish tenants' rights. The Irish M.P.s demanded that the arbitrary rule of the landlords be legally restricted. Specifically, they demanded that tenants be granted the right to compensation for improvements if, without fault on their part, they were evicted. In his speech, Palmerston called the demands of the Irish M.P.s "communist doctrines" and a "violation of the basic principles of social order".

p. 37

- <sup>7</sup> *Social-Demokrat*—organ of the Lassallean General Association of German Workers (see Note 30) published under this title in Berlin between 1864 and 1871; in 1864-65, it was edited by J. B. Schweitzer.

p. 39

- <sup>8</sup> The reference is to P.J. Proudhon's *Essai de grammaire générale* published in: Bergier, *Les éléments primitifs des langues*. Besançon, 1837.

p. 39

- <sup>9</sup> P. J. Proudhon, *Qu'est-ce que la propriété? ou Recherches sur le principe du droit et du gouvernement*. Paris, 1840.

p. 39

- <sup>10</sup> T. R. Malthus, *An essay on the principle of population, as it affects the future improvement of society, with remarks on the speculations of Mr. Godwin, M. Condorcet, and other writers*. London, 1798.

p. 40

- <sup>11</sup> The reference is to the work by J. P. Brissot de Warville, *Recherches philosophiques. Sur le droit de propriété et sur le vol, considérés dans la nature et dans la société*. In: *Bibliothèque philosophique du législateur, du politique, du jurisconsulte*. T. VI, Berlin, Paris, Lyon, 1782.

p. 41

- <sup>12</sup> P. J. Proudhon, *Système des contradictions économiques, ou Philosophie de la misère*. T. I-II, Paris, 1846.

p. 41

- <sup>13</sup> The reference is to the part played by Etienne Cabet in the political movement of the French proletariat in the 1830s-40s. Through the newspapers *Le Populaire* and *Le Populaire de 1841*, he not only advocated his utopian projects, but also criticised the July monarchy (1830-48) and helped spread democratic ideas. In his works, articles and leaflets, Cabet came out against the capitalist system. Despite his utopian ideas, Cabet did a great deal to educate the French proletariat politically.

p. 44

- <sup>14</sup> Ch. Dunoyer, *De la liberté du travail, ou Simple exposé des conditions dans lesquelles les forces humaines s'exercent avec le plus de puissance*. T. I-III, Paris, 1845.  
p. 44
- <sup>15</sup> The February 1848 Revolution in France overthrew the Orleans and proclaimed France a republic.  
p. 44
- <sup>16</sup> In the speech at a session of the French National Assembly on July 31, 1848, Proudhon made a number of petty-bourgeois utopian proposals (abolition of loan interest, etc.), and at the same time described the repressive measures against the participants in the Paris proletarian uprising of June 23-26, 1848, as a manifestation of arbitrary brutality.  
p. 44
- <sup>17</sup> In his speech on July 26, 1848, Thiers opposed Proudhon's proposals submitted to the Finance Commission of the French National Assembly. The speech was printed in *Compte rendu des séances de l'Assemblée Nationale*. Vol. II, Paris, 1849, pp. 666-71.  
p. 44
- <sup>18</sup> *Gratuité du crédit. Discussion entre M. Fr. Bastiat et M. Proudhon*. Paris, 1850.  
p. 45
- <sup>19</sup> The reference is to P. J. Proudhon's *Théorie de l'impôt, question mise au concours par le conseil d'Etat du canton de Vaud en 1860*, published in Brussels and Paris in 1861.  
p. 45
- <sup>20</sup> P. J. Proudhon, *La Révolution sociale démontrée par le coup d'Etat du 2 Décembre*. Paris, 1852.  
p. 45
- <sup>21</sup> P. J. Proudhon, *Si les traités de 1815 ont cessé d'exister? Actes du futur congrès*. Paris, 1863.  
In this work, Proudhon opposed a revision of the Vienna Congress (1815) decisions on Poland, and the support by European democracy of the national liberation struggle there, thus justifying the policy of oppression pursued by Russian tsarism.  
p. 46
- <sup>22</sup> *Théorie des lois civiles, ou Principes fondamentaux de la société*. T. I-II, Londres, 1767; was published anonymously.  
p. 46
- <sup>23</sup> This statement to the editorial board of the *Social-Demokrat* was written by Marx and sent to Engels for signing on February 6, 1865. Marx and Engels

regarded it as the last warning to Schweitzer, who made advances to the Bismarck government and extolled Lassalle through the newspaper. The direct cause for the statement was provided by a note by the newspaper's Paris correspondent M. Hess printed on February 1, which slandered French members of the International.

Marx's and Engels's criticism forced the paper to somewhat alter its tone. In February 1865 issue No. 21 carried a note by M. Hess, in which he took back his slanderous assertions, which allowed Marx and Engels to withdraw their statement. However, they decided to stop contributing to the paper, and broke off all relations with it on February 23, 1865 (see this collection, pp. 49-50). p. 47

- <sup>24</sup> An allusion to Joseph Bonaparte, Napoleon III's cousin, whose residence was Palais Royal. Joseph Bonaparte headed a group of Bonapartists, who tried to distract the people from campaigning against the existing regime by means of demagoguery and feigning opposition to Napoleon III.

p. 47

- <sup>25</sup> *L'Association* - French magazine of cooperative workers' associations, which were under the influence of bourgeois republicans. Published from 1864 to 1866 in Paris and Brussels.

p. 47

- <sup>26</sup> An allusion to Napoleon III, who resided in Tuileries.

p. 47

- <sup>27</sup> The reference is to the Bismarck Cabinet formed in 1862.

p. 49

- <sup>28</sup> Marx has in mind his letter to Liebknecht of February 2, 1865, which has not survived, but its contents is set forth in Marx's letter to Engels of February 3, 1865.

p. 49

- <sup>29</sup> This refers to Marx's letter to Schweitzer written on February 13, 1865 (see this collection, pp. 218-19).

p. 50

- <sup>30</sup> The *General Association of German Workers* (Lassalleans) - the first political organisation of German workers set up in 1863. Right from the start, the Association was under the strong influence of Ferdinand Lassalle, one of its founders and first President. Lassalle and his followers spread and supported reformist illusions concerning the possibility of replacing capitalism by socialism by means of universal suffrage and producers' associations subsidised by the reactionary Prussian bourgeois-and-junker state. Lassalleans opposed the economic struggle of the working class, strike actions and trade union movement, supported Bismarck's policy for uniting Germany from above, and sought to collude with him.

Their reformist ideas hindered the forming of proletarian class consciousness and impeded the establishment of a Marxist workers' party in Germany.

In 1875, at a congress held in Gotha, the General Association of German Workers joined forces with the German Social-Democratic Workers' Party set up in 1869 and headed by Bebel and Liebknecht.  
p. 50

- <sup>31</sup> The reference is to the active participation of the British trade unions in the democratic campaign for the Second Reform Bill in 1865-67.

p. 54

- <sup>32</sup> During the American Civil War, the American trade unions supported the Northern states in their struggle against slavery; in the spring of 1864, they came out against the reactionary Hastings-Folger strike bill.

p. 54

- <sup>33</sup> The conference of British trade union delegates held in Sheffield on July 17-21, 1866, was attended by 138 delegates representing 200,000 organised workers. The main question discussed at a number of sittings was that of preventing lock-outs. The conference appealed to the trade unions to join the International Working Men's Association.

p. 54

- <sup>34</sup> Tolain, who was elected to the National Assembly in February 1871, as a representative of the Paris proletariat, remained in it after the Paris Commune was proclaimed and refused to comply with the demand of the Commune to make a break with this reactionary body, whose chief goal was to suppress the revolution in Paris. Tolain's betrayal showed that the Right-wing Proudhonists openly sided with counter-revolutionaries. The Federal Council of the International's Paris sections resolved to expel Tolain from the International Working Men's Association. On April 18, even before it received the Federal Council's resolution, the General Council of the International discussed Tolain's treacherous behaviour and resolved to publicly stigmatise him. Having received the resolution on April 25, the General Council endorsed the decision to expel Tolain from the International.

• p. 58

- <sup>35</sup> Marx spoke on the subject of trade unions in the debates concerning the draft resolution introduced by Delahaye proposing to set up an international trade union federation with a view to carrying out administrative decentralisation and building "a true Commune of the future". Delahaye's utopian ideas, which anticipated anarcho-sindicalism and denied the role of the proletarian state and of the political party of the proletariat, were criticised by Marx. The conference rejected Delahaye's draft and adopted a resolution calling for stronger interna-

tional contacts between trade unions on the basis of practical tasks facing the working-class movement.

p. 59

- <sup>36</sup> In the debate concerning the international contacts of trade unions, the Belgian delegate Steens voiced his fears that the national trade unions may have been swallowed up by the British trade unions in case of an international amalgamation.

p. 59

- <sup>37</sup> The reference is to Chartism.

p. 59

- <sup>38</sup> The reference is to the Executive Committee of the Reform League founded in London in the spring of 1865 on the initiative and with direct participation of the General Council as a political centre for giving guidance to the mass movement of the workers for the Second Reform Bill.

p. 60

- <sup>39</sup> In December 1870, in New York, representatives of several sections formed a Central Committee as the leading body of the International in the United States. In July 1871, sections No. 9 and 12, headed by the bourgeois feminists Victoria Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin, joined those sections and began campaigning for bourgeois reforms in the name of the International. Without the knowledge of the New York Central Committee, Section No. 12 applied to the General Council demanding that it recognise it as the leading section in the United States. At the same time, it conducted a campaign in the press against those sections that defended the proletarian character of the organisation. In its resolution of November 5, 1871 the General Council rejected the claims of Section No. 12 and confirmed the powers of the New York Central Committee. Nevertheless, Section No. 12 continued their activities, which led to consolidation of petty-bourgeois elements in certain organisations of the International in the USA and to a split, in December 1871, between the proletarian and petty-bourgeois sections.

A Provisional Federal Council with Friedrich Adolph Sorge and Friedrich Bolte among the membership and also a second committee headed by Victoria Woodhull and other bourgeois reformists from Section No. 12, were set up in New York. The General Council resolutely supported the proletarian wing of the North American Federation and Section No. 12 was expelled from the International without waiting for a regular congress to be convened. The General Council accepted the Provisional Federal Council as the only leading body of the International. A permanent Federal Council was elected at the Congress of the North American Federation in July 1872, which included almost all the members of the Provisional Council. In his article *The International in America* (see this



collection, pp. 68-75). Engels gave a detailed account of the causes for the split in the US Federation.

p. 63

- <sup>40</sup> The reference is to Resolution VI of the Basle Congress on organisational questions "On the Order of Expelling Sections from the Association". It gave the General Council the right to temporarily expel individual sections from the International for the period till the next regular congress.

p. 63

- <sup>41</sup> In October 1871, representatives of the British sections and of the trade unions siding with the International formed the British Federal Council. From the beginning, its leadership comprised a group of reformists headed by Hales, Secretary of the General Council. This group campaigned against the General Council seeking to supplant it in England by the British Council and opposed the policy of proletarian internationalism the General Council pursued in the Irish question. In their campaign, Hales and his supporters allied with Swiss anarchists, American bourgeois reformists, etc.

After the Hague Congress (1872), the reformist faction of the British Federal Council refused to accept the decisions of the congress and together with the Bakuninists launched a slanderous campaign against the General Council and Karl Marx. They were opposed by another Federal Council section which backed Marx and Engels. Early in December 1872, the British Federal Council became divided. One faction retained the name of the British Federal Council and established a direct contact with the General Council, which by that time had moved its seat to New York. Attempts by reformists to lead the British Federation of the International failed. The British Federal Council continued to exist till the end of 1874.

p. 65

- <sup>42</sup> The *Crimean War of 1853-56* (the Eastern War) was fought between Russia and a coalition comprising England, France, Turkey and Sardinia. It was caused by a clash of their economic and political interests in the Middle East.

• p. 65

- <sup>43</sup> This refers to a clash between the Chartists and the Irish in Manchester on March 8, 1842 provoked by bourgeois nationalists, leaders of the Irish Repeal Association (supporters of the repeal of the Anglo-Irish Union of 1801), who were hostile to the working-class movement in England and to Chartism in particular.

The repealers expelled O'Connor and a group of Chartists from the Hall of Science, where O'Connor was supposed to give a lecture.

p. 66

<sup>44</sup> *La Emancipacion* – weekly newspaper of the Madrid sections of the International, published from 1871 to 1873.

p. 68

<sup>45</sup> *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly* – American newspaper published in New York between 1870 and 1876 by the feminist leaders Victoria Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin.

p. 69

<sup>46</sup> *Shakers* – an American religious sect.

p. 70

<sup>47</sup> The circular of the Provisional Federal Council issued on December 4, 1871 was printed by the newspaper *New Yorker Demokrat* on December 9, 1871.

p. 71

<sup>48</sup> *Der Volksstaat* – central organ of the German Social-Democratic Workers' Party published in Leipzig between 1869 and 1876.

p. 72

<sup>49</sup> *The New-York Herald* – daily newspaper of the Republican Party published in New York from 1835 to 1924.

p. 72

<sup>50</sup> The Hague Congress of the International Working Men's Association took place on September 2-7, 1872. It was convened amid acute ideological struggle between the revolutionary proletarian forces led by Marxists, on the one hand, and anarchists and reformists, on the other. The bone of contention was the political programme of the working-class movement formulated in the resolutions of the London Conference of the International on the political action of the working class and against sectarianism. The Congress was to approve these resolutions thus completing the elaboration of the programme of the International Working Men's Association.

By a majority vote the Congress approved the resolutions and adopted a programme which included the basic Marxist tenets on the role of the proletarian party in the revolutionary struggle of the workers, etc. The programme was formulated as Article 7a of the General Rules of the International.

p. 76

<sup>51</sup> The *Manchester Foreign Section* of the International Working Men's Association was established in August 1872 and included mostly émigré workers who lived in Manchester and were, for the most part, members of the International. The Manchester Foreign Section waged a vigorous campaign against the reformist part of the British Federal Council, which rejected the decisions of the Hague Congress. The section supported the work of Marx and Engels toward strengthening the British Federation and against disor-

ganising elements in it. The address was written by Engels on the request of the Manchester Section and, after approval by the section published as a pamphlet and sent out to all British members of the International.

p. 77

- <sup>52</sup> The reference is to the circular issued on December 10, 1872 by the part of the British Federal Council which had made a break with it, "To All British Sections of the International Working Men's Association". The circular urged for the rejection of the Hague Congress decisions and the convocation of an extraordinary congress of the Federation in January 1873 in London.

p. 77

- <sup>53</sup> *The International Herald*—a weekly published in London in 1872-73, actually the official organ of the British Federal Council of the International. In the late 1872 and early 1873, the paper made a major contribution to the struggle against reformists who had split from the British Federal Council.

p. 77

- <sup>54</sup> This refers to the insurrection of the Paris proletariat on June 23-26, 1848, brutally suppressed by the bourgeoisie. It was the first great civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

p. 87

- <sup>55</sup> The "fleshpots of Egypt"—a Biblical expression quoted ironically by Engels.

p. 87.

- <sup>56</sup> E. Sax, *Die Wohnungszustände der arbeitenden Klassen und ihre Reform*. Wien, 1869.

p. 91

- <sup>57</sup> *Illustrated London News*—English illustrated weekly published from 1842 onwards.

*Über Land und Meer*—German illustrated weekly published in Stuttgart from 1858 to 1923.

*Gartenlaube*—abridged title of the German petty-bourgeois literary weekly *Die Gartenlaube. Illustriertes Familienblatt*, published in Leipzig in 1853-1903 and in Berlin in 1903-43.

*Kladderadatsch*—illustrated satirical weekly journal published in Berlin since 1848.

*Fusilier August Kutschke*—pen name of Gotthelf Hoffmann, a German poet, author of a nationalistic soldiers' song during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71.

p. 91

- <sup>58</sup> This is a quotation from Hansemann's speech at a sitting of the First United Provincial Diet on June 8, 1847.

p. 95

<sup>58</sup> *Internationale et révolution. A propos du congrès de la Haye par des réfugiés de la Commune, ex-membres du Conseil Général de l'Internationale.* Londres, 1872.

p. 109

<sup>60</sup> G. W. F. Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik*. Th. I, Abt. 2; *Werke*, Bd. IV, Berlin, 1834, S. 15, 75, 145.

p. 109

<sup>61</sup> Artur Mulberger's articles printed in *Der Volksstaat* in February and early March 1872 were later published as a separate volume: A. Mulberger, *Die Wohnungsfrage. Eine sociale Skizze*. Separat-Abdruck aus dem *Volksstaat*. Leipzig, 1872, S. 25.

p. 112

<sup>62</sup> *Fenians* – members of a secret Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood which was set up in the late 1850s by Irish émigrés in the United States and later in Ireland itself. The Fenians campaigned for the national independence of Ireland and the establishment of an Irish republic. After an abortive Fenian uprising in 1867, the British government arrested hundreds of Irish people; the prisoners were treated with extreme cruelty, tortured, and doomed to death from starvation. The General Council came out in their defence and launched a public protest against the way the prisoners were treated.

p. 114

<sup>63</sup> The reference is to the Second Parliamentary Reform in England in 1867, which granted franchise to a certain section of the working class.

p. 116

<sup>64</sup> The *Labour Representation League* was founded in 1869 by the trade union leaders who wanted to get "workers" elected to the House of Commons and did not evade collaboration with the Liberal Party. The League ceased to exist after 1880.

p. 117

<sup>65</sup> *Critique of the Gotha Programme* was Marx's comment on the Gotha Congress (May 1875) at which the two German workers' parties, the Social-Democratic Workers' Party (the Eisenachers) and the Lassallean General Association of German Workers, united to form the Socialist Workers' Party of Germany (from 1890 – the Social-Democratic Party of Germany). The work criticised the draft programme of the future party, which suffered from opportunistic mistakes and made concessions of principle to Lassalleanism. Marx and Engels welcomed the establishment of a united workers' party but opposed the ideological compromise with the Lassalleans which later served to strengthen opportunistic elements in German Social-Democracy.

In this work, Marx further developed the fundamental issues of the theory of socialist revolution and the strategy and tactics of the proletarian struggle. He elaborated important propositions on the inevitability of a spe-

cial historical stage of revolutionary transition from capitalism to communism; on the state of that period which is the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*; on the two stages of communist society; on the principal features of communism; and on proletarian internationalism and the party of the working class.

The abridged version of the work was printed as late as in 1891 by Frederick Engels in *Die Neue Zeit*, theoretical organ of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, despite opposition from the opportunistic section of its leadership. The text of *Critique of the Gotha Programme* was published for the first time in the USSR in 1932.

p. 120

- <sup>66</sup> The *Eisenach Party (Eisenachers)* – the Social-Democratic Workers' Party of Germany founded in 1869 at the inaugural congress in Eisenach. Its leaders were August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht, who were strongly influenced by Marx and Engels. Although somewhat immature and occasionally incorrect, the programme of the party rested on the principles of Marxism.

p. 120

- <sup>67</sup> The *People's Party of Germany* was established in 1865; it consisted of democratic petty-bourgeois and bourgeois elements, particularly in South Germany. The party opposed Prussian supremacy in Germany and advocated the plan of a so-called "Greater Germany", which should have included Prussia and Austria. The party wanted a federative German state, not a single centralised democratic republic.

p. 120

- <sup>68</sup> See Note 30.

p. 121

- <sup>69</sup> Here Marx ironically alludes to Hasselmann, editor-in-chief of the *Neuer Social-Demokrat*, organ of the Lassallean General Association of German Workers.

p. 131

- <sup>70</sup> The *League of Peace and Freedom* – a bourgeois pacifist organisation founded by petty-bourgeois republicans and liberals in Switzerland in 1867. Asserting that it was possible to prevent wars by setting up "the United States of Europe", the League spread false ideas among the people and diverted the proletariat from class struggle.

p. 132

- <sup>71</sup> *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* – reactionary daily newspaper published in Berlin from 1861 to 1918. Between the 1860s and 1880s official organ of Bismarck's government.

p. 132

- <sup>72</sup> *L'Atelier* – monthly magazine of French artisans and workers leaning towards Christian socialism. It was published in Paris from 1840 to 1850. Its editorial board included workers' representatives reelected every three months.

p. 135

- <sup>73</sup> *Kulturkampf* – a system of legislative measures carried out in the 1870s by the Bismarck government under the banner of a campaign for secular culture. It was turned against the Catholic Church and the Party of the Centre, which supported separatist and anti-Prussian sentiments of the officials, landowners and bourgeoisie in the petty and medium-sized states of South Germany. In the 1880s, however, Bismarck repealed the greater part of these reforms in order to consolidate the reactionary regime.

p. 140

- <sup>74</sup> *Exceptional Law against Socialists (Anti-Socialist Law)* was introduced by Bismarck on October 21, 1878. It banned the Social-Democratic Party, all party organisations, mass workers' organisations and the labour press; socialist literature was confiscated and social democrats subjected to reprisals. But these measures did not break down the party, which modified its activities to suit underground conditions. The party continued to use every legal opportunity to expand its contacts with the people, and its influence was constantly increasing. Under pressure from the workers' movement, the law was abrogated on October 1, 1890.

p. 144

- <sup>75</sup> The reference is to the repeal in 1824 of the Combination Laws banning all coalitions and any workers' organisations. However, the act of 1825 greatly restricted the activities of trade unions. Mere agitation to join the union and to take part in strikes was regarded as coercion and punished as a criminal offence.

p. 146

- <sup>76</sup> *The Court of Chancery*, or the court of equity – the highest court of England; after the reform of 1873 – a division of the High Court of Justice. The jurisdiction of this court presided over by a Lord Chancellor, was mainly over probate matters, contractual obligations, joint-stock companies, etc. In a number of cases, its competence overlapped with those of other high courts. As distinct from the other courts, which conducted legal proceedings on the basis of common law, the Court of Chancery was guided by the rules of equity.

p. 150

- <sup>77</sup> The reference is to the dissatisfaction caused among Irish landlords by the attempts of the Gladstone government to restrict to some extent their arbitrariness as regards tenants. The Land Act of 1881 restricted their right to

evict the tenant if the latter paid the rent accurately, the rent itself being fixed for 15 years. Though the Act of 1881 gave the landlords an opportunity to sell their lands to the state at high profit, and the fixed rent remained extremely high, the English landowners opposed the Act seeking to retain their unlimited powers in Ireland.

p. 155

- <sup>78</sup> The reference is to the British Election Reform of 1867 carried out by the Conservatives under pressure from the people. As a result, the number of voters in England doubled; franchise was granted to a section of skilled workers.

p. 158

- <sup>79</sup> *East End*—the eastern part of London, inhabited by the proletariat and the poorer classes.

p. 161.

- <sup>80</sup> The *New Madrid Federation* was formed in 1872 by the members of the editorial board of *La Emancipación*, expelled by an anarchist majority from the Madrid Federation for having exposed the activities of the secret Alliance of Socialist Democracy in Spain. The New Madrid Federation waged a vigorous campaign against anarchism in Spain, popularised scientific socialism, and fought for an independent proletarian party in the country. In 1879, the members of the New Madrid Federation organised the Socialist Workers' Party of Spain.

p. 166

- <sup>81</sup> The article "*May 4 in London*" was devoted to the first celebration of the International Working People's Day, May 1, by the socialist parties and workers' organisations in compliance with the decision of the International Socialist Workers' Congress held in Paris in 1889. The massive demonstrations and meetings, best organised in Austria, were conducted in accordance with the congress resolution, under the slogan of the struggle for a legally established 8-hour day. The first celebration of the May Day was also well organised by the London workers on the first Sunday in May, May 4, 1890. Contrary to attempts by the reformist trade union leaders and the British opportunist-socialist Hyndman to assume command in the demonstration and conduct it under conciliatory slogans, it showed that the working people were ready to campaign for revolutionary socialist demands. Only a small section of workers from the so-called workers' aristocracy chose to follow the reformists. The rest—about 200,000—supported the demands put forward by Marxists. The principal role in the demonstration belonged to unskilled gas workers and London dockers, who were the first in the 1880s to launch a campaign for new mass trade unions and for an 8-hour day.

p. 169

- <sup>82</sup> The *Gas Workers' and General Labourers' Union*—the first trade union of un-

skilled workers in the history of the labour movement in England. It was established at the end of March-beginning of April 1889, and twelve months later had a membership of up to 100,000. The union demanded an 8-hour day and took an active part in the dockers' strike of 1889, which was a major event in the history of the British working-class movement of the late 19th century. Over 30,000 workers of other trades also took part in it. As a result, the workers' demands for higher wages and better working conditions were satisfied.

p. 170

- <sup>63</sup> Radical clubs was the name given in the second half of the 19th century to organisations which included mostly workers and were headed as a rule by representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie. In the late 1880s, with the rise of the working-class movement, the number of these clubs increased, and socialist ideas won popularity among their members.

p. 170

- <sup>64</sup> An allusion to Hyndman's behaviour during a demonstration organised by British socialists in Trafalgar Square on November 13, 1887. The meeting ended in a clash with police, several hundred people were injured and a few organisers arrested. During these events known in the history of the British working-class movement as "the bloody Sunday" Hyndman slipped away.

p. 170

- <sup>65</sup> The *strike in Silvertown* (an East-End district) was held in September-December 1889 by workers manufacturing underwater electric cables and rubber goods. Over 3,000 strikers demanded higher wages, better pay for overtime and work on holidays, and higher wages for women and children. Eleanor Aveling, Marx's daughter, was among the organisers of the strike and in the course of it founded a union of young working women. The strike lasted for nearly three months but failed because other trade unions left it without support.

p. 171

- <sup>66</sup> The reference is to the strike of the Gas Company workers in the southern part of London, which lasted from December 1889 to February 1890. It started because the company-owners did not comply with an earlier agreement to introduce an 8-hour working day, raise wages, and hire only members of the Gas Workers' Union. The strike failed due to insufficient support by other trade unions, and also because in 1890 the strike movement began to abate. The 8-hour working day at the Company enterprises was abolished.

p. 171

- <sup>67</sup> The *Social-Democratic Federation* - a socialist organisation in England set up in August 1884. It consisted of heterogeneous socialist elements, primarily intellectuals. For a long time, the Federation was headed by reformists with



Hyndman as their leader, who pursued opportunist and sectarian policies. The revolutionary Marxist section of the Federation (Eleanor Aveling, Edward Aveling, Tom Mann and others) campaigned for closer contact with the mass labour movement.

After the split of the Federation in the autumn of 1884, the Left wing formed an independent Socialist League. The opportunist influence in the Federation increased, but being affected by mass revolutionary sentiments elements discontented with the opportunist leadership continued to grow in number. In 1907, when the labour movement was on the upsurge, the Federation was transformed into the Social-Democratic Party, which in 1911 united with Leftist elements in the Independent Labour Party to form the British Socialist Party.

*Possibilists* or *Broussists*—an opportunist trend in the French socialist movement led by P. Brousse and B. Malon, who in 1882 caused a split in the Workers' Party of France. The leaders of this trend proclaimed the reformist principle of seeking only what was possible; hence the name Possibilists.

p. 172

- <sup>88</sup> *Manchesterism* (*Manchester school*)—a trend in the economic thought of the first half of the 19th century expressing interests of industrial bourgeoisie. The advocates of this trend—the Free Traders—stood for free trade and resisted all intervention by the state in the economy. The trend was headed by Cobden and Bright, two Manchester textile manufacturers. In the sixties, the Free Traders formed the Left wing of the Liberal Party.

Speaking of "the Manchesterianism of the old trade unions" Engels meant the bourgeois-reformist character of their activities. Seeking to confine the campaign of the proletariat to the economic struggle for shorter working day, higher wages and a change in labour legislation in favour of the workers, the leaders of these trade unions diverted the proletariat from the class goals of the labour movement, opposed political struggle and advocated compromise and class peace with the bourgeoisie.

p. 174

- <sup>89</sup> The reference is to the Baden-Palatinate uprising in defence of the Imperial Constitution, which took place in May-July 1849. Engels took part in it.

• p. 175

- <sup>90</sup> Engels' work *Brentano contra Marx* was a response to the pamphlet *Meine Polemik mit Karl Marx* by Lujo Brentano, a prominent advocate of Katheder-Socialism. Brentano made an attempt to discredit Marx as a scholar and to undermine the faith in the theory of Marxism.

*Katheder-Socialism* (socialism of the chair)—a trend in bourgeois ideology of the 1870s-90s. Its representatives, primarily professors of German universities, preached bourgeois reformism under the guise of socialism from the university chairs. They claimed that the state was a supra-class institu-

tion able to reconcile the hostile classes and gradually introduce socialism without infringing on the interests of capitalists. Their programme was limited to workers' insurance against sickness and accident and to adoption of a few factory acts.

p. 176

- <sup>91</sup> Engels' work *A Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme of 1891* comments on the draft programme drawn up by the Social-Democratic Party of Germany. Engels considered it a step forward as compared to the Gotha Programme of 1875, and at the same time made a critical analysis of it, particularly section II (Political Demands), which contained an obviously opportunist idea of a peaceful growing of capitalism into socialism, did not demand an end to the reactionary monarchist regime in Germany and establishment of a democratic republic as the immediate political task of the proletariat. Engels further developed the Marxist tenets on the economic and political goals of the proletariat, the importance of the campaign for democratic reforms, the ways of transition to socialism, and the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Engels's work, as well as Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* published by Engels at about the same time, were of major importance for drawing up the final text of the programme adopted at the Erfurt Congress in 1891. This victory of Marxism greatly affected the international socialist movement. The Erfurt Programme scientifically proved that capitalism was doomed and that socialism was bound to take its place, and clearly showed that for a socialist transformation of society the proletariat had to win political power. However, several Engels' remarks on political demands were not taken into account, and this was indicative of the Party's conciliatory attitude towards opportunism. Lenin said that the chief drawback of the Erfurt Programme, the cowardly concession to opportunism, was the fact that "it said nothing about the dictatorship of the proletariat".

The leadership of the German Social-Democratic Party did not publish Engels' work for a long time, it appeared only in 1901.

p. 180

- <sup>92</sup> The so-called constitutional conflict between the Prussian Government and the bourgeois-liberal majority of the Provincial Diet broke out in February 1860, when the latter refused to approve the bill on the reorganisation of the army proposed by von Roon, the War Minister. Up to 1866, the Prussian Government carried out the military reform with no regard to the Provincial Diet and spent money without its approval. The conflict was resolved only after Prussia's victory over Austria. Prussian bourgeoisie surrendered to Bismarck, who was the chief figure behind the militarist policy of the Prussian Cabinet.

p. 180

- <sup>93</sup> Engels ironically combines the names of two dwarfish "sovereign" states in-

incorporated in the German Empire in 1871: Reuss-Greiz and Reuss-Greiz (Gera)-Schleiz-Lobenstein-Ebersdorf.

p. 180

- <sup>94</sup> Engels refers to the speech made by the Social-Democratic deputy M. Kayser in the Imperial Diet in 1879 who by consent of his faction defended the government project of protective tariffs. Marx and Engels condemned the Social-Democrats who supported this proposal, which suited big industrialists and landowners, and levelled criticism at their leaders for their reconciliatory stand.

See also Note 88.

p. 182

- <sup>95</sup> A reference to the special rights of the South-German states, mainly Bavaria and Württemberg, laid down in the treaties on their incorporation (1870) in the North German Confederation and in the 1871 constitution of the German Empire (the right to levy a special tax on brandy and beer and to administer the post and telegraph). Bavaria also retained independence in administering the army and the railways. A special foreign policy commission which had the veto right was formed from representatives of Bavaria, Württemberg and Saxony in the Federal Council.

p. 182

- <sup>96</sup> A reference to the dictatorship of Napoleon Bonaparte, who proclaimed himself first consul after the coup d'état of the 18th Brumaire (November 9), 1799, which was the last step of bourgeois counter-revolution in France. The new regime replaced the First Republic established on August 10, 1792. In 1804, France was proclaimed an Empire, and Napoleon the Emperor of the French (1809-14 and 1815). Regardless of the change of regimes quite a few bureaucratic institutions of the First Empire continued to function in France even during the Third Republic (1870-1940).

p. 183

- <sup>97</sup> The programme of the French Workers' Party founded in 1879 was drawn up in May 1880. It comprised the theoretical part or introduction written by Karl Marx, and the practical part, the minimum programme written by J. Guesde and P. Lafargue. Engels said that the theoretical introduction was the Communist substantiation of the tasks facing the French Workers' Party. The programme was adopted by the Havre Party Congress in November 1880.

p. 186

- <sup>98</sup> The programme of the Socialist Workers' Party of Spain was adopted at the Barcelona Congress in 1888.

p. 186

- <sup>99</sup> The so-called true-blue or tri-coloured republicans were members of the moderate republican bourgeois party which relied on industrial bourgeoisie

and a section of liberal intelligentsia connected with it. Its organ was *Le National* published in Paris between 1830 and 1851, with Armand Marrast as its editor-in-chief.

*Organisation du travail* – Louis Blanc's book where he outlined his petty-bourgeois-socialist programme.

p. 187

- <sup>100</sup> This refers to the German Social-Democratic Workers' Party (the Eisena-chers). See Note 66.

p. 188

- <sup>101</sup> See Note 65.

p. 188

- <sup>102</sup> Engels refers to the works and speeches of Lujo Brentano on the English trade unions. (L. Brentano, *Die Arbeitergilden der Gegenwart*. Zweiter Band. "Zur Kritik der englischen Gewerkvereine". Leipzig, 1872). Brentano eulogised British trade unionism as the ideal organisation of the working class giving it a chance to improve radically its condition under capitalism and get rid of capitalist exploitation. According to Brentano, well-organised trade unions make political struggle and a political party of the working class redundant.

p. 189

- <sup>103</sup> The Frankfurt Congress of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany took place on October 21-27, 1894. One of the speakers on the agrarian question, the main item on the agenda, was G. H. Vollmar, who demanded that paragraphs representing the interests of both the toiling peasantry and the rural bourgeoisie be included into the agrarian programme then being drawn up. Vollmar's opportunist stand was not duly rebuffed. The congress elected a special commission to work out the draft agrarian programme as a supplement to the Party programme.

The Twelfth Congress of the French Workers' Party at Nantes was held on September 14-16, 1894. It worked out the preamble of the programme and inserted a few concrete demands into it. Some of them ran counter to the Marxist standpoint on the agrarian question. See criticism of the Nantes agrarian programme in Engels' work "The Peasant Question in France and Germany" (see this collection, pp. 194-208).

p. 192

- <sup>104</sup> *Vorwärts* – daily paper, central organ of the German Social-Democratic Party, was published in Berlin from 1891 on the decision of the Halle Congress as a successor to the *Berliner Volksblatt* published from 1884 under the title *Vorwärts*. *Berliner Volksblatt*. It appeared till 1933.

p. 192

- <sup>105</sup> Engels refers to the article "Nochmals der Parteitag" printed

in *Vorwärts*, No. 263, November 10, 1894. The article rebuffed the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, which used Vollmar's opportunist speeches on the agrarian question at the Frankfurt am Main congress for a slanderous attack on German Social-Democracy.

p. 192

- <sup>106</sup> *Die Neue Zeit*—theoretical journal of the German Social-Democratic Party published in Stuttgart from 1883 to 1923.

p. 193

- <sup>107</sup> The reference is to the agrarian programme adopted at the Tenth Congress of the French Workers' Party held in Marseilles on September 24-28, 1892. It advanced a number of concrete demands furthering the interests of rural proletarians and small peasants. However, the programme contained a few deviations from socialist principles.

p. 194

- <sup>108</sup> *Der Sozialdemokrat*—weekly newspaper of the German Social-Democratic Party published in Berlin in 1894-95.

Lafargue's report mentioned by Engels was printed in the supplement to the newspaper *Der Sozialdemokrat*, No. 38, October 18, 1894.

p. 207

- <sup>109</sup> Engels apparently refers to the Chartist meeting which took place in Manchester on October 4, 1858. Jones spoke at this meeting.

p. 216

- <sup>110</sup> *Progressives*—members of a bourgeois party established in Prussia in 1861. The Progressives demanded unification of Germany under Prussian supremacy, the convocation of an all-German Parliament and the establishment of a liberal ministry responsible to the Chamber of Deputies.

p. 218

- <sup>111</sup> When Prince William of Prussia (King of Prussia from 1861) became Regent in October 1858, he asked moderate liberals to form the government. Bourgeois press proclaimed this policy a "New Age". In fact, it was aimed exclusively at consolidating the positions of Prussian monarchy. The bourgeoisie, whose hopes had been shattered, refused to endorse the draft military reform proposed by the government. The constitutional conflict that ensued (see Note 92) and Bismarck's appointment as prime minister in September 1862 put an end to the "New Age".

p. 218

<sup>112</sup> See Note 117.

p. 221

<sup>113</sup> The reference is to the all-German Workers' Congress convened in Berlin on September 26, 1868 by Schweitzer. It founded several trade unions which formed a single union headed by Schweitzer. This organisation was completely subordinated to the Lassallean General Association of German Workers. Marx sharply criticised Schweitzer for convening the congress, which led to a split in the German trade union movement.

p. 221

<sup>114</sup> *The Fortnightly Review*—an English journal dealing with history, philosophy and literature; was founded in 1865 by a group of bourgeois radicals; subsequently leaned toward liberalism; was published under this title in London up to 1934.

p. 224

<sup>115</sup> The reference is to the articles published in *Der Volksstaat*, Nos. 98 and 102 on December 7 and 21, 1872.

p. 227

<sup>116</sup> *The Bee-Hive Newspaper*—trade union weekly published in London from 1861 to 1876.

From November 1864 it was the official organ of the International Working Men's Association but in fact continued to stick to a liberal trade-unionist stand, being closely tied with the reformist trade union leaders and radical bourgeoisie. In 1869 it was bought by Samuel Morley, a liberal bourgeois activist who became its editor.

p. 227

<sup>117</sup> *Neuer Social-Demokrat*—newspaper of the Lassallean General Association of German Workers published in Berlin from 1871 to 1876.

p. 231

<sup>118</sup> Engels' letter to Bebel of March 18-28, 1875 is closely connected with Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (see this collection, pp. 120-42). The letter, intended for the Eisenach leaders, criticised the Gotha draft programme and warned the Eisenachers against concessions to Lassalleans.

p. 232

<sup>119</sup> See Note 66.

p. 232

<sup>120</sup> See Note 67.

p. 233

- <sup>121</sup> *Frankfurter Zeitung* (full title *Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt*) – petty-bourgeois democratic daily published in Frankfurt am Main between 1856 and 1943.

p. 233

- <sup>122</sup> See Note 70.

p. 234

- <sup>123</sup> *Demokratisches Wochenblatt* – German workers' newspaper published and edited by Wilhelm Liebknecht in Leipzig in 1868-69. In 1869 the paper became the central organ of the Social-Democratic Workers' Party and renamed *Volksstaat*.

p. 237

- <sup>124</sup> *Die Zukunft* – a social-reformist magazine published in Berlin from October 1877 to November 1878 by a group of Social-Democrats and edited by Karl Höchberg.

p. 240

- <sup>125</sup> *Jahrbuch für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* – a social-reformist magazine published by Karl Höchberg in Zurich in 1879-81.

p. 244

- <sup>126</sup> *Freiheit* – German anarchist weekly founded by Johann Most in London in 1879, and later published in Belgium (1882) and the USA (1882-1910).

p. 244

- <sup>127</sup> This letter written by Marx and Engels to Bebel was in fact intended for all leaders of the German Social Democratic Party and was a real party document. The draft letter was written by Engels in mid-September. On September 17, when Marx got back to London, they discussed it and worked out the final version.

p. 249

- <sup>128</sup> *Die Laterne* – social-democratic satirical weekly published and edited by Karl Hirsch in Brussels in 1878-79.

p. 250

- <sup>129</sup> The reference is to barricade fighting in Berlin on March 18, which started the revolution of 1848-49 in Germany.

p. 259

- <sup>130</sup> *Die Neue Gesellschaft* – social-reformist magazine published in Zurich from 1877 to 1880.

p. 262

- <sup>131</sup> *National Liberals* – the party of German, primarily Prussian, bourgeoisie

established in the autumn of 1866 as a result of the split among the Progressives. National Liberals relinquished the claims of the bourgeoisie to political power in order to promote their economic interests and considered that their chief goal was unification of the German states under Prussian supremacy. After the unification of the country, the National Liberal Party finally shaped as a party of big bourgeoisie.

p. 269

- <sup>132</sup> In his letter to Engels written on October 23, 1879. Bebel excused the tactics of the Social-Democratic faction in the Imperial Diet during the debate on protective tariffs by reference to the resolutions of the Party congresses in 1876 and 1877, which stated that protective tariffs of free trade was not a matter of principle for Social-Democracy and for that reason the congress allowed Party members to choose position at their own discretion.

p. 269

- <sup>133</sup> Engels refers to the report of the Social-Democratic members of the German Reichstag printed in Nos. 2, 3 and 4 of *Sozialdemokrat* on October 12, 19 and 26, 1879.

p. 270

- <sup>134</sup> The reference is to the attempt on the life of William I, made by the German anarchist Nobiling on June 2, 1878. This, as well as an attempt on Wilhelm's life made by the apprentice Hödel on May 11, 1878, gave Bismarck an excuse to intensify reprisals against Social-Democrats and demand that the Reichstag pass an exceptional law against socialists.

p. 271

- <sup>135</sup> In his letter to Engels written on October 23, 1879 Bebel marked Höchberg's rare unselfishness.

p. 271

- <sup>136</sup> The reference is to Wilhelm Liebknecht's participation in the Saxon Provincial Diet and the oath he had taken.

p. 274

- <sup>137</sup> *Wailers (Heuler)*—the nickname given to bourgeois constitutionalists by republican democrats during the revolution of 1848-49 in Germany.

p. 275

- <sup>138</sup> *Overseas Trade Society (Seehandlung)*—a commercial and credit society founded in Prussia in 1772. It enjoyed a number of important government privileges and granted large loans to the government, becoming its banker and broker. In 1904 it was officially made the State Bank of Prussia.

p. 280

- <sup>139</sup> The reference to Karl Kautsky's article "International Labour Laws"



printed anonymously in *The Labour Standard*, No. 15, August 13, 1881.  
p. 281

- <sup>140</sup> The fourteenth annual congress of British trade unions took place in London on September 12-17, 1881.  
p. 281

- <sup>141</sup> The reference is to the article by J. G. Eccarius "A German Opinion of English Trade Unionism" printed anonymously in *The Labour Standard*, No. 14, August 6, 1881. Eccarius extolled the reformist German trade unions founded in 1868 by Hirsch and Duncker (the so-called Hirsch-Duncker unions).  
p. 281

- <sup>142</sup> An allusion to the Anti-Socialist Law.  
p. 283

- <sup>143</sup> See Note 89.  
p. 285

- <sup>144</sup> On September 25, 1882, at the St. Etienne Congress the French Workers' Party split into two factions: the Possibilists and the Guesdists (the Marxist section). The latter left the Congress, met at Roanne on September 26, and constituted as the sixth congress of the French Workers' Party. The Possibilists, who remained at the congress in St. Etienne, renounced both in form and essence the party programme drawn up with the help of Marx and adopted at the Havre Congress in November 1880. The congress expelled from the party the leaders and activists of the Marxist section and took a new name, the Workers' Party of Socialist Revolutionaries.

The Marxist congress in Roanne held between September 26 and October 1, 1882 confirmed its loyalty to the Marxist programme adopted by the Havre Congress.

p. 289

- <sup>145</sup> An ironic allusion to the opportunist stand of the former Communist League member and subsequently a National Liberal Johann Miquel. In his letters to Marx (1856), Miquel asserted that the revolution in Germany was not very near and that during it the proletariat should establish a close alliance both with petty and liberal bourgeoisie, and after the revolution, pursue a policy which would not scare away bourgeoisie.

p. 290

- <sup>146</sup> *Union fédérative du Centre* was one of the six federative unions constituting the French Workers' Party. The union leadership was totally Possibilist.  
p. 290

- <sup>147</sup> Engels quotes Lafargue's letter of November 24, 1882.  
p. 291

<sup>148</sup> See Note 144.

p. 291

<sup>149</sup> The *Thirty Years' War* (1618-48) was an all-European war caused by acute contradictions between various groups of states which took the form of a struggle between Protestantism and Catholicism. The initial opposition to reactionary forces of feudal and absolutist Europe developed, especially in 1635, into a number of invasions of Germany by foreign troops which competed with each other. The war ended in 1648 by concluding the Treaty of Westphalia, which confirmed the political fragmentation of Germany.

p. 292

<sup>150</sup> See Note 134.

P. 292

<sup>151</sup> The *Democratic Federation* – half-bourgeois and half-proletarian union of radical British societies set up by Hyndman on June 8, 1881. In August 1884 it was reorganised into the Social-Democratic Federation.

p. 294

<sup>152</sup> In 1881, Hyndman published a pamphlet *England for All*, in which he examined a few sections of Vol. I of *Capital*, distorting their contents. In his letter to Hyndman of July 2, 1881, Marx protested against Hyndman's attempt to adopt certain propositions of scientific communism for substantiating the bourgeois-democratic tasks of the Democratic Federation and made a complete break with him.

p. 294

<sup>153</sup> On May 9, 1884, when the German Imperial Diet discussed the extension of the Anti-Socialist Law, Bismarck stated that he recognised the right to work. Soon afterwards, the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* explained this statement falling back upon the English practice of sending the able-bodied unemployed to workhouses or places of confinement; accordingly, it was proposed that in Germany, too, the unemployed were to do hard work for wages or meals.

p. 296

<sup>154</sup> Late in 1884, Chancellor of Germany Bismarck, seeking to carry out a more vigorous colonial policy, demanded that the Imperial Diet approve subsidies to shipping companies for arranging regular steamship communication with East Asia, Australia and Africa. The Left wing of the Social-Democratic faction, led by Bebel and Liebknecht, refused to vote for subsidies, but the Right wing which was headed by Auer and Dietz, and constituted the majority of the faction, even before the official debates began, supported the idea under the pretext of developing international contacts. During the debate in March 1885, the Right wing of the Social-Democratic faction voted for opening an East-Asian and Australian steamship routes but made

several qualifications, particularly that new ships be built in German shipyards. Only when the Imperial Diet refused to meet this demand, the whole faction voted the project down. The behaviour of the majority of the faction caused criticism from *Der Sozialdemokrat* and Social-Democratic organisations. The dissent was so acute that the party was on the verge of a split.

p. 298

- <sup>155</sup> The opportunist majority of the Social-Democratic faction in the Imperial Diet was displeased with the criticism by *Der Sozialdemokrat* of its attitude to the bill on subsidies to shipping companies, and made an attempt to question the right of the party organ to criticise the activities of the faction. However, most of the local Social-Democratic organisations supported the editorial board, and the faction majority was forced to give up its claims.

p. 298

- <sup>156</sup> On May 4, 1886 during the meeting in Haymarket Square in Chicago an agent-provocateur exploded a bomb which killed 7 policemen and 4 workers. The police opened fire. Several people were killed and over two hundred wounded. The authorities used this provocation to launch an attack against the labour movement. Mass arrests were made and eight labour leaders taken to court. Seven were sentenced to death and one to 15-year imprisonment.

p. 301

- <sup>157</sup> Engels refers to the elections of the Mayor of New York, which were held on November 2, 1886. The candidate of the United Workers' Party was Henry George, who got 31 per cent of the votes.

p. 302

- <sup>158</sup> The *Order of the Knights of Labor* was founded in Philadelphia in 1869 and united mostly unskilled workers. Its aim was to establish cooperative societies and organise mutual aid. It took part in a number of workers' campaigns. The leaders of the Order were in fact against participation of workers in political struggle and advocated class collaboration. The Order disintegrated towards the end of the 1890s.

p. 302

- <sup>159</sup> See Note 110.

p. 304

- <sup>160</sup> The *Socialist League* was founded in December 1884 by the group of British socialists who had left the Social-Democratic Federation, dissatisfied with the opportunist policy of its leaders. In 1889 the League dissolved because the anarchist elements prevailed in it.

p. 305

- <sup>161</sup> *Opportunists*—the name given in the early 1880s to the party of moderate bourgeois republicans in France. It expressed the interests of big bourgeoisie.

p. 306

- <sup>162</sup> Engels refers to the Paris International Conference convened by French Possibilists in 1886. The conference discussed the international labour legislation, the normal length of the working day, and professional training. Its resolutions were trade-unionist in character and rejected the need for the political struggle of the working class.

p. 306

- <sup>163</sup> The reference is to the London International Trade Union Congress held in November 1888. It was attended by trade union representatives of England, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Italy and France (those who sided with the Possibilists). Despite the opposition of reformist leaders, the congress called on the working people to campaign for labour protection laws and a legalised 8-hour day.

p. 306

- <sup>164</sup> The reference is to the Ninth National Congress of Possibilists held in Charleville on October 2-8, 1887. The attention centred on participation in election campaigns.

p. 307

- <sup>165</sup> See Note 163.

p. 308

- <sup>166</sup> A congress of the Bakuninist Jura Federation held in Sonvillier on November 12, 1871, adopted the "Circular to All Federations of the International Working Men's Association", which was directed against the General Council.

p. 308

- <sup>167</sup> This refers to the resolution of the St. Gall Congress of the Socialist Workers' Party of Germany to convene an international workers' congress in 1888.

p. 309

- <sup>168</sup> See Note 82.

p. 310

- <sup>169</sup> *Home Rule*—the demand of self-government for Ireland within the British Empire, advanced in the 1870s by the Irish liberal bourgeoisie.

p. 311

- <sup>170</sup> See Note 82.

p. 312

<sup>171</sup> See Note 86.

p. 312

<sup>172</sup> The reference is to the *Amalgamated Engineers*, a society founded in 1851, which was a good example of an English trade union organisation. It united skilled mechanical workers and channelled the workers' campaign into professional and economic boundaries, diverting them from political struggle.

p. 312

<sup>173</sup> See Note 85.

p. 313

<sup>174</sup> The London Trades Council was set up in May 1860 and included the leaders of larger trade unions and representatives of workers' aristocracy. When the Trades Union Congress was established in 1868, the London Council headed by reformist leaders ceased to be the national centre, although it continued to hold strong position in the trade union movement, being a vehicle of Liberal bourgeois influence on the working class.

p. 313

<sup>175</sup> *Fabian essays in Socialism*. London, 1889.

p. 314

<sup>176</sup> The reference is to the International Socialist Workers' Congress, held in Paris in July 1889.

p. 315

<sup>177</sup> The split among Possibilists (see Note 87) into two factions—Broussists and Allemanists—took place at the congress in Châtellerault, held on October 9-15, 1890.

p. 316

<sup>178</sup> Engels refers to the polemics of the *Vorwärts* newspaper with G. H. Vollmar, provoked by his article "Le socialisme de M. Bismarck et le socialisme de l'empereur Guillaume", printed in the French magazine *Revue bleue. Revue politique et littéraire* in June 1882. In this article, Vollmar alleged that several points of the Erfurt Programme were close to state socialism advocated by Bismarck and William II. *Vorwärts* censured Vollmar's slanderous statements.

p. 317

<sup>179</sup> In his article in *Münchener Post*, July 19, 1892 Vollmar distorted Bebel's letter. The readers may have received an impression that Bebel accused Liebknecht of neglecting his duties.

p. 317

<sup>180</sup> *Fabians*—members of the reformist Fabian Society, founded in 1884. They

were mostly bourgeois intellectuals – scholars, writers and politicians who denied the need for proletarian class struggle and a socialist revolution and maintained that the transition from capitalism to socialism was possible only through petty reforms and a gradual transformation of society. In 1900 the society joined the Labour Party.

p. 319

- <sup>181</sup> The reference is to the article by Edward Aveling and Eleanor Marx-Aveling “Die Wahlen in Grossbritannien”, published in *Die Neue Zeit*, Vol. II, No. 45, 1891-92. When editing the article, Kautsky omitted the passages criticising the English socialist organisations for sectarianism and opportunism.

p. 320.

- <sup>182</sup> This apparently refers to Kautsky’s article, “Der Parteitag und der Staatssozialismus”, published in *Die Neue Zeit*, Vol. I, No. 7, 1892-93 following Vollmar’s article “Zur Streitfrage über den Staatssozialismus”, published in the same issue.

p. 323

- <sup>183</sup> Engels refers to the Left wing of the Conservative Party which consisted mainly of the industrial bourgeois and intellectuals. During the election campaign conducted after the reform of 1884, this faction advanced a demagogic programme of social reforms trying to win workers’ votes.

p. 326

- <sup>184</sup> Engels refers to members of the Socialist Labour Party of North America, which came into being in 1876 at the congress in Philadelphia as a result of the merger of the American sections of the First International and other socialist organisations in the USA. The majority of the party was made up of immigrants (mostly Germans) loosely tied with the native American workers. The party proclaimed as its programme struggle for socialism, but its sectarian leaders prevented it from becoming a truly revolutionary Marxist party.

p. 327

- <sup>185</sup> The *Independent Labour Party* – a reformist organisation, founded in Britain in 1893 during a revival of the strike movement and a growth of the movement for the independence of the working class from the bourgeois parties. The party was headed by James Keir Hardie.

Right from the start, the Independent Labour Party occupied a bourgeois-reformist stand paying main attention to parliamentary struggle and parliamentary compromise with the Liberal Party.

p. 327

- <sup>186</sup> *Liberal-Unionists* – supporters of the Union with Ireland. In 1886, after a disagreement on the Irish question, their group headed by Joseph Chamber-

lain split from the Liberal Party and sided with the Conservative Party which they formally joined a few years later.

p. 327

- <sup>187</sup> General elections to Parliament were held in England between July 12 and 29, 1895. In the House of Commons the Conservatives won a majority of over 150 votes. Many candidates of the Independent Labour Party, including Keir Hardie, were voted down.

p. 328

- <sup>188</sup> On November 14, 1894, Bebel made a speech at a party meeting in the second election district of Berlin. He criticised the opportunist stand taken by Vollmar and other Bavarian Social-Democrats at the Frankfurt Congress of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany (see Note 103) and also the half-and-half resolution on the agrarian question, adopted by the congress. Bebel's speech was printed in *Vorwärts*, No. 268, November 16, 1894.

p. 330

- <sup>189</sup> See Note 188.

p. 331

- <sup>190</sup> Engels called the separatist position taken by the Bavarian Social-Democrats *Sonderbund*, by analogy with the separatist union of reactionary Catholic Swiss cantons in the 1840s.

p. 331

- <sup>191</sup> See Note 103.

p. 331

- <sup>192</sup> *Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt*—German daily published in Frankfurt am Main from 1856 to 1943; in the 1880s, organ of the People's Party of Germany (see Note 67).

p. 333

- <sup>193</sup> See Note 103.

p. 334

- <sup>194</sup> The *Second Congress of the Bavarian Social-Democratic Organisation* took place on September 30, 1894 in Munich. It adopted a decision to set up an organisation of Bavarian Social-Democrats headed by its representatives in the Provincial Diet—Vollmar, Grillenberger, etc.

p. 334

- <sup>195</sup> See Note 190.

p. 334

- <sup>196</sup> See Note 67.

p. 336

- <sup>197</sup> According to the Bill on Preventing Coup d'Etats (Umsturzvorlage) the existing laws were supplemented by articles stipulating strict punitive measures for attempts to overthrow the existing state order. The Bill was rejected by the Imperial Diet in May 1895.

p. 337

- <sup>198</sup> At the sitting of the German Imperial Diet on December 6, 1894 the members of the Social-Democratic faction remained sitting when the chairman proposed the health of Emperor William II. Their behaviour was regarded as an insult to His Majesty, and a district court in Berlin decided to bring action against Liebknecht. Imperial Chancellor Hohenlohe demanded that the Imperial Diet approve this decision, but the latter declined to do so.

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*Kant, Immanuel* (1724-1804)—founder of classical German philosophy, idealist.—40, 42  
*Kapell, August* (b. 1844)—German Social-Democrat, carpenter by trade, Lassallean, member of General Association of German Workers, deputy to Imperial Diet (1877-78).—286  
*Kautsky, Karl* (1854-1938)—German Social-Democrat, journalist, editor of *Die Neue Zeit* (1883-1917); adhered to Marxism in the 1880s; subsequently joined camp of opportunists to become ideologist of Centrism in German Social-Democratic Party and Second International.—281, 319-21, 323  
*Kayser, Max* (1853-1888)—German Social-Democrat; member of Imperial Diet from 1878; belonged to right wing of Social-Democratic group.—252, 254-55, 266, 268, 269  
*Kovalevsky, Maxim Maximovich* (1851-1916)—Russian scientist and politician; author of works on history of primitive communal system.—245

## L

*Lafargue, Laura* (1845-1911)—prominent figure in French working-class movement, wife of Paul Lafargue, and Marx's daughter.—226

- Lafargue, Paul* (1842-1911) - active member of international working-class movement and disseminator of Marxism; member of General Council of First International; took part in organising International's sections in France (1869-70), Spain and Portugal (1871-72), one of the founders of Workers' Party of France. - 192, 207, 226, 289, 291, 328, 330
- Lamartine, Alphonse* (1790-1869) - French poet, historian and politician; Minister of Foreign Affairs and virtual head of Provisional Government in 1848. - 33
- Lange, Friedrich Albert* (1828-1875) - German neo-Kantian philosopher, opponent of materialism and socialism. - 133
- Lassalle, Ferdinand* (1825-1864) - German petty-bourgeois socialist, journalist and lawyer; one of the founders of General Association of German Workers (1863); supported unification of Germany "from above" under supremacy of Prussia, laid down the beginning of opportunist trend in German working-class movement. - 124, 125, 126, 131, 133, 134, 140, 187, 188, 219, 220-21, 222-23, 224, 232-33, 234-36, 238, 277, 288-89, 300, 316
- Laube, Heinrich* (1806-1884) - German writer, stage manager of Vienna theatres. - 273
- Levi, Leone* (1821-1888) - British economist, statistician and lawyer. - 161
- Liebknecht, Wilhelm* (1826-1900) - prominent figure in German and international working-class movement; took part in the 1848-49 revolution; member of Communist League and of First International; one of the founders and leaders of German Social-Democracy; on some questions held conciliatory position in relation to opportunism. - 120, 180, 188, 221, 232, 237, 239, 242, 245, 249-64, 266, 271, 277, 294, 297, 316, 318, 331-33, 335, 337
- Linguet, Simon Nicolas Henri* (1736-1794) - French lawyer and economist; profound critic of bourgeois liberties and ownership. - 46
- Loria, Achille* (1857-1943) - Italian sociologist and economist, representative of vulgar political economy, falsifier of Marxism. - 293
- Louis Bonaparte* - see *Napoleon III*
- Louis Napoleon* - see *Napoleon III*
- Louis Philippe* (1773-1850) - Duke of Orleans, King of the French (1830-48). - 135, 138, 182, 221, 224
- Lübeck, Karl* - German journalist, Social-Democrat, emigrated from Germany in 1873. - 245
- Ludlow, John Malcolm Forbes* (1821-1911) - prominent figure in British co-operative movement, lawyer, Christian Socialist, journalist. - 224-25

## M

- MacDonald, Alexander* (1821-1881) - reformist leader of British trade unions; Secretary of National Union of Miners; M.P. from 1874; pursued Liberal policies. - 115, 119
- Maddoss, G. W.* - American bourgeois radical. - 74
- Malon, Benoit* (1841-1893) - French socialist, member of First Inter-



- national, one of leaders and ideologists of Possibilists.-274, 289
- Malthus, Thomas Robert* (1766-1834)-English clergyman and economist; advocate of misanthropic theory of population.-40, 133, 234, 290-91
- Mann, Thomas* (1856-1941)-prominent figure in British labour movement, mechanic; joined Left wing of Social-Democratic Federation (1885) and Independent Labour Party (1893); in late 1880s, took active part in organising mass movement of unskilled workers, and in uniting them into trade unions.-311, 312
- Manning, Henry Edward* (1808-1892)-British theologian; Archbishop of Westminster from 1868, cardinal from 1875.-311
- Marat, Jean Paul* (1743-1793)-French publicist, prominent figure in French revolution (end of 18th century), Jacobin leader.-131
- Marrast, Armand* (1801-1852)-French publicist and politician; leader of modern republicans; editor of newspaper *National*; member of Provisional Government and Mayor of Paris (1848); President of Constituent Assembly (1848-49).-33, 187
- Marx-Aveling, Eleanor*-see *Aveling, Eleanor*
- Marx, Karl* (1818-1883)-59, 80, 85, 109, 113, 166, 176, 187, 188, 226, 234, 236-37, 239, 243, 249, 270-71, 275, 289, 290, 294, 296, 297, 308, 314, 316, 317, 325
- Meyer, Rudolf Hermann* (1839-1899)-German economist and writer, Conservative; opposed Bismarck's policies.-293, 294
- M.H.*-see *Hess, Moses*
- Millot, T.*-French émigré, member of Central Committee of North American sections of International; adopted bourgeois radical views.-74
- Miquel, Johannes* (1828-1901)-German politician and financier; Communist League member in 1840s; subsequently National Liberal.-182, 260, 290, 293
- Morley, Samuel* (1809-1886)-English manufacturer and politician; Liberal M.P.-117-18
- Most, Johann Joseph* (1846-1906)-German anarchist; joined working-class movement in 1860s; emigrated to England in 1878; expelled from Social-Democratic Party as anarchist in 1880 and emigrated to USA in 1882.-240, 243, 244, 246, 283
- Mottershead, Thomas* (c. 1825-1884)-English weaver; member of General Council of First International; after the Hague Congress (1872), headed reformist wing of British Federal Council; expelled from International by decision of General Council, May 30, 1873.-77, 118
- Mülberger, Arthur* (1847-1907)-German journalist, Proudhonist.-107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 229

## N

- Napoleon I Bonaparte* (1769-1821)-Emperor of the French (1804-14 and 1815).-46, 92
- Napoleon III (Louis Napoleon Bonaparte)* (1808-1873)-nephew of Napoleon I, President of Second Republic (1848-51), Emperor of the French (1852-70).-45, 49, 138, 226

*Nobling, Karl Eduard* (1848-1878) – German anarchist; made unsuccessful attempt on William I, German Emperor (1878). – 270

## O

*O'Connor, Feargus* (1794-1855) – leader of Chartism; founder and editor of *The Northern Star*; after 1848, a reformist. – 32, 33, 66

*Odger, George* (1820-1877) – reformist leader of British trade unions; member of General Council of First International (1864-71), and its President (1864-67); opposed Paris Commune in 1871; withdrew from General Council which condemned him as renegade. – 118

*Owen, Robert* (1771-1858) – British utopian socialist. – 37, 102, 164

## P

*Palgrave, Robert Harry Inglis* (1827-1919) – English banker and economist. – 163

*Palmerston, Henry John Temple, Viscount* (1784-1865) – British statesman, Tory; Whig leader from 1830; Prime Minister (1855-58 and 1859-65). – 37

*Peter I* (1672-1725) – Tsar of Russia from 1682, Emperor from 1721. – 45

*Potter, George* (1832-1893) – reformist leader of British trade unions; carpenter by trade; member of London Trades Council and leader of Amalgamated Union of Building Workers; founder and publisher of *The Bee-Hive*. – 118, 311

*Powderly, Terence Vincent* (1849-1924) – opportunist leader of American labour movement in the 1870-90s; mechanic by trade, head of Order of the Knights of Labor (1879-93); opposed revo-

lutionary proletarian movement and advocated collaboration with bourgeoisie. – 302

*Proudhon, Pierre Joseph* (1809-1865) – French publicist, economist and sociologist, ideologist of petty bourgeoisie and one of the founders of anarchism. – 30, 39-46, 49, 79, 82, 83, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 94, 97, 107, 108, 109, 111, 112, 143, 165, 166, 167, 168, 209-15, 223, 225, 236, 276

*Pyat, Félix* (1810-1889) – French journalist and petty-bourgeois democrat; took part in 1848-49 revolution; for a number of years, carried on slander campaign against Marx and International using to this end the French section in London; member of Paris Commune. – 61

## Q

*Quarck, Max* (pen name *Freiwald Thüringer*) (1860-1930) – German jurist and journalist; right-wing Social-Democrat. – 297

## R

*Ramm, Hermann* – German Social-Democrat, editor of the newspapers *Volksstaat* and *Vorwärts*. – 239

*Raumer, Friedrich* (1781-1873) – German reactionary historian and politician. – 46

*Reynolds, George William MacArthur* (1814-1879) – British politician and journalist; petty-bourgeois democrat; publisher of *Reynolds's Newspaper*. – 216

*Ricardo, David* (1772-1823) – English classical economist. – 42, 153, 235

*L. Richter* – see *Höchberg*

*Robespierre, Maximilien* (1758-1794) – active figure in French Revo-

lution (end of the 18th century), Jacobin leader, head of revolutionary government (1793-94).- 224

*Rousseau, Jean Jacques* (1712-1778)- French Enlightener, democrat, ideologist of petty bourgeoisie.- 46, 123

## S

*Saint-Simon, Henri* (1760-1825)- French utopian socialist.- 39, 224

*Sand, George* (*Dudevant, Aurore*) (1804-1876)- French authoress of several social novels.- 29

*Sax, Emil* (1845-1927)- Austrian economist.- 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 102

*Schiller, Friedrich* (1759-1805)- German dramatist and poet.- 309

*Schinderhannes*- see *Bückler, Johann Schlessinger, Maximilian* (1855-1902)- German Social-Democrat, Lassallean.- 245

*Schlüter, Hermann* (d. 1919)- German Social-Democrat; emigrated to US in 1889; took part in socialist movement in America, author of works on history of British and American labour movement.- 312-13

*Schramm, Carl August*- German Social-Democrat, reformist, criticised Marxism.- 247, 252, 256, 268, 273, 278

*Schulze-Delitzsch, Franz Hermann* (1808-1883)- German politician and vulgar economist; advocate of Germany's unification under Prussia; leader of Progress Party in 1860s; tried to detract workers from the revolutionary struggle by organising cooperative societies.- 102, 222

*Schweitzer, Johann Baptist* (1833-1875)- prominent Lassallean in

Germany; President of the General Association of German Workers (1867-71); supported Bismarck's policy of unifying Germany "from above" under Prussia's supremacy; fought against Social-Democratic Workers' Party.- 39, 49, 71, 218-19, 220, 222-23, 256, 315

*Senior, Nassau William* (1790-1864)- English vulgar economist; apologist of capitalism, opposed shortening of working day.- 36

*Shakespeare, William* (1564-1616)- English dramatist and poet.- 226, 238

*Shaw, George Bernard* (1856-1950)- British playwright and publicist; member of Fabian Society from 1884.- 319

*Shaw, Robert* (d. 1869)- a member of British labour movement; member of General Council of International.- 57

*Shipton, George*- English trade unionist; reformist; Secretary of London Trades Council (1871-96).- 173, 281

*Singer, Paul* (1844-1911)- a leader in German working-class movement; member (from 1877) and President (from 1890) of Board of Social-Democratic Party of Germany; Chairman of Social-Democratic group in Imperial Diet from 1885; opposed opportunism and revisionism.- 252

*Sorge, Friedrich Adolph* (1828-1906)- prominent figure in international and American working-class and socialist movement; took part in 1848-49 revolution; active member of International; member of General Council in New York and its General Secretary (1872-74); active disseminator

- of Marxism.-240-41, 266-67, 302-05, 308-09, 310-11, 314, 324, 325-26, 327-29, 334-35
- Steens, Eugene*-active member of Belgian working-class movement; journalist; opposed anarchism.-59
- Strousberg, Bethel Henry* (1823-1884)-big railway contractor: German by birth, lived in England.-260
- Stumpf, Paul* (c. 1827-1913)-active member of German working-class movement; member of Social-Democratic Party of Germany.-336-37

## T

- Thiers, Adolphe* (1797-1877) French historian and statesman; Orleanist; President of Republic (1871-73); hangman of Paris Commune.-44
- Tolain, Henri Louis* (1828-1897)-French engraver, right-wing Proudhonist, leader of Paris section of the International, delegate to several congresses of International; deputy to National Assembly; during Paris Commune deserted to Versailles and was expelled from International.-58
- Tölcke, Karl Wilhelm* (1817-1893)-German Social-Democrat, a leader of the Lassallean General Association of German Workers.-232, 238
- Tussy*-see *Aveling, Eleanor*.

## U

- Ure, Andrew* (1778-1857)-English chemist, vulgar economist, author of several works on industrial economics.-36

## V

- Vaillant, Edouard Marie* (1840-1915)-French socialist, Blanquist; member of Paris Commune, member of General Council of International; founder of Socialist Party of France; later reformist.-307
- Victoria* (1819-1901)-Queen of Great Britain (1837-1901).-328
- Viereck, Louis* (1851-1921)-German Social-Democrat, under Exceptional Law, one of leaders of Party's right wing; member of Imperial Diet (1884-87).-250, 254
- Vollmar, Georg Heinrich* (1850-1922)-German Social-Democrat, leader of opportunist reformist wing of German Social-Democratic Party; editor of *Sozialdemokrat* (1879-80); deputy to Imperial Diet and Bavarian Provincial Diet.-192, 193, 267, 290, 317, 321, 323, 329, 331, 332-33, 334
- Voltaire, François Marie (Arouet)* (1694-1778)-French enlightener; deist philosopher, satirist and historian.-46

## W

- Webb, Sidney* (1859-1947)-British public figure; jointly with wife Beatrice wrote several works on history and theory of British labour movement, one of the founders of reformist Fabian society.-321
- Weitzing, Wilhelm* (1808-1871)-prominent figure in the early German working-class movement; a theoretician of utopian egalitarian communism.-187, 241

*West, William* American bourgeois radical; member of Central Committee of North American Federation of the International; secretary of Section 12, expelled from International by the Hague Congress in 1872.- 69, 70, 74

*William II, Hohenzollern* (1859-1941) - German Emperor and Prussian King (1888-1918).-323

*Willich, August* (1810-1878) - Prussian officer, Communist League member, took part in 1849 Baden-Palatinate uprising.-285

*Wilson, Joseph Chavelock* (1858-1929) - prominent figure in Brit-

ish trade union movement, organiser and president of National Union of Seamen and Stokers; from 1892, was repeatedly elected M.P; advocate of collaboration with bourgeoisie.- 190

*Woodhull, Victoria* (1838-1927) - bourgeois American feminist; in 1871-72, attempted to seize leadership of North American Federation of International by organising sections of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements; headed Section No. 12 expelled from International by the Hague Congress (1872).- 69, 71, 75

